

Femme Fatales



October

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Barbara Leigh Vampirella

HAMMER MUMMY
VALERIE LEON

JULIE STRAIN
"HEAVY METAL II"

STELLA STEVENS
LOCKY LAMBERT
TINA DESIREE BORG

Volume 6 Number 2



A NEW MAGAZINE FROM CINEFANTASTIQUE

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Don't Miss Issue #2: Our cover story takes you deep into Cybernetics as it explores the rising new infomaniacs of Virtual Reality. We examine the "Clashing Roles of Women in Fantasy Television" from **BEWITCHED** to **STAR TREK: VOYAGER**. We cover the new **STAR TREK** CD-ROM and take a behind-the-scenes look at the making of **WHITE DWARF**, the exciting TV project from **WILD PALMS** creator Brian Wagner and Oscar winner Francis Ford Coppola. **ISSUE #2 WELCOMES AUTHOR JOHN MCCARTHY** (The *Pen Makers*) AS A REGULAR COLUMNIST. The man who coined the term "Splatter Movies" will now be a regular contributor to Visions in John McCarthy's *Visionaries* department. Issue #2 has also expanded to reveal secrets for greater in-depth commentary of the latest genre television.

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Volume 18 No. 68



Volume 28 No. 1



Volume 28 No. 12

COMING NEXT IN CINEFANTASTIQUE !

Don't miss our cover story on the making of **TOY STORY**, the first all computer-generated feature from Walt Disney, starring the voice talents of Tom Hanks, Tim Allen, Jim Varney, Don Rickles, and Wallace Shawn. San Francisco writer Lawrence French, who did our cover stories on **ED WOOD** and **THE NIGHTMARE BEFORE CHRISTMAS**, goes behind-the-scenes of the tiny studio Pixar Animation Group, to detail the blend of artistry and cutting edge digital technology that went into the making of this major Pixar landmark. French interviews director John Lasseter, the Academy Award-winning animation pioneer behind Pixar's groundbreaking short **TIN TOY**, and the artists, engineers and technicians responsible for harnessing the power of the computer to service a classic fairy tale story in which a boy's toys come to life. Also in the same issue, **X-FILES** writer Paula Vitars provides a profile of Fox's new science fiction series **SPACE ABOVE AND BEYOND**, created and produced by **X-FILES** starlet Glen Plonka and Jim Wang, including interviews with **Alien** and **Warrior** about filming the pilot in Australia and visual effects producer Tim Mullings and effects supervisor Glenn Campbell, on creating digital imagery of first year Marines in 2000 on a mission to stop an alien race's conquest of Earth. Plus, another preview look at **GOLDENEYE**, the new James Bond instalment in starring Pierce Brosnan, the scoop on Tribstar's long-delayed Julia Roberts horror vehicle **MARY KELLY**, behind the scenes of LM's amazing CD-ROM efforts for this summer's **CASPER**, Wes Craven on directing Eddie Murphy in Paramount's horrorcomedy **A WHOLE NEW WORLD**, in **BRICK**, YA. Author spotlight Dan O'Bannon on **CINEFANTASTIQUE**, his latest story on comic science fiction, and low-budget director Harry Greenaway. Depart on the making of **XTRM: H. HATCH THE SKULLS**. Subscribe today!

Cinefantastique is the premier of horror, fantasy and science fiction fans, published continuously since November 1970, celebrating our 25th anniversary in 1995! A comprehensive, objective and colorful movie magazine, Cinefantastique has enjoyed steady success, growth and popularity over the years because it was the first magazine to realize that fans want a "sense of wonder" don't merely fascinate children, but touch the child in all of us.

Subscribe to this at last issue of Cinefantastique for just \$18, a savings of \$6 off the newsstand price of \$5.95 and select your rare back issue from among those pictured above. Also subscribe to Visions and take two free issues!



Elvira was scheduled as this issue's cover woman; however, the Mistress of the Dark and the writer of her profile—one "Vesale de Ville"—renamed me of the "October ed." Translation: the media has declared Halloween as Elvira's exclusive holiday. Thus, I was officially requested to reserve Elvira's coverage for next issue—debating in September/October—which would chronologically be in with her most seasonal popularity. I bow to the beautiful black widow's preference.

But the aforementioned Vesale de Ville is another story; please, dear readers, allow me to vent. It seems Ms. de Ville moonlights as a B "actress" and nightclub vocalist; fortunately, she's infinitely more talented as a scribe than a singer. Believe me, I caught her "live on entertainment" set on a U.S. Air flight, en route from Baltimore to L.A.; de Ville's creamy cooing prompted a record number of walkouts (sans parachutes). This egotistic Madonna wannabe submitted an autobiographical profile to the office, we promptly rejected it, but offered her the option of interviewing Elvira. Admittedly, Ms. de Ville submitted an insightful dialogue with not only Elvira but her alter ego, Cassandra Peterson. De Ville has interviewed no less than seven actresses; but, somehow, each interview turned into the "Vesale de Ville story," with only a cursory mention of each profiled thespian. Against my most previous objections, she somehow wormed her way into serving as FF's representative at 1995-96 film conventions. Be lowminded, she's the incarnation of a rebel Lucille Ball from hell, a nagging agent apart from the bowels of stardom domination whose less-than-divine mission is to plague me. De Ville's like a fly buzzing around a barbecue on a humid day, she just won't go away. Personally, I don't like her.

Before retreating to Heck and Monica's sanctuary, I'd like to thank FF's miracle worker Catherine Carson, and CFO's A-Team (Lisa Tomczak-Walington & Ruth Kopala), for supervising the technology that has given this magazine a new schedule of eight times a year.

Bill George



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The "multi-media" sex goddess invites you into her scandalous past. Special attraction: a preview of her role in the animated, full-length feature **HEAVY METAL II**. / Article by Julie Stuenkel

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Unlike past **WITCHBOARD** heroines, Lucky Lambert contributed to the screenplay, discontent with "abused female" roles, she kicked Satan's butt. / Interview by Catherine Carson

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She was beguiling in **BLOOD FROM THE MUMMY'S TOMB**, but Leon's resistance to perform nudy prompted Hammer Films to drop her contract. / Interview by Alan Jones

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Leigh embodied the voluptuous femme fatale on magazine covers. Offscreen, she matched her "vampy" alter ego with a provocative lifestyle. / Interview by Catherine Carson

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Caution: She's unarmed, unshowered and ascending to "erotic thriller" celebrity. O'Brien relates her professional ascent from stripper to confidant to steam queen. / Interview by Dan Scoppertoni

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She graduated from "sex kitten" to actress, director and writer. Stevens chronicles her stellar career from **THE NUTTY PROFESSOR** to the present. / Article by Linnea Quigley

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Think all pulp heroines were brass-bikini babes imperiled by bug-eyed monsters? Tell that to Pat Savage (Doc's feisty cousin) and the diabolical daughter of Fu Manchu. / Article by Russ Miller

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Eager for work, ingenues fill the "nudity quota" for exploitation pic. Rachel Salzman, an actress and single mom, takes you behind-the-scenes on her B-film odyssey. / Interview by Dan Scoppertoni

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Daylaine's former fetuses sizzle! Slipping into swimsuits for TV's most popular soap, the cast aptly walked themselves as **THE BOLD AND THE BEAUTIFUL**. / Article by Tina Desirée Berg

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LETTERS

TOTALLY RUDE, DUDE

Regarding the malicious character kill orchestrated by Leon Miller, i.e. his "reconstructed" interview of me (*FF* 3/4) to feed his own "treasures" ego...

I can't possibly fit into two paragraphs the number of misquotes. The lunacy of "I was as pleased because I had to do a dance scene" (personally, I LOVE to dance!), strategically followed by a sentence stating that my death scene prompted a "standing ovation from the crew"—PLEASE! Miller portrayed me as a prima donna who insists on "being difficult." Hardly. I'm happy to be working. Furthermore, I do not use grammar which implies I live life "psyched, barreled in a totally killer Malibu tube, dude!" And I do not refer to the ladies I've respectfully done make up for as "disgusting, total bitches" for God's sake—do not mention the many other %*% & that illuminate from Leon Miller's little mind.

Personally, I think Leon should get a life and concentrate more on his subject's film, music and screenwriting credits that got them where they are in the first place, as opposed to the size of their panties and whether or not he'll ever get into them. Enjoy your burger, Leon!

Carolyn Taye-Loren
Los Angeles, CA

CYNTHIA ROTHROCK

After months of only adorning your magazine, your cover issue with Cynthia Rothrock finally put a crowbar to my wallet! I remember years ago, when I lived in Maryland, reading about her growing success in a field that still remains insufferably macho. Yet, Rothrock's problems are symptomatic of what women, in general, suffer in Hollywood. They become magnified in the action/horror/fantasy

genres where even great initial success can turn into frustration, and disappointment, as uncreative executives haggle over how best to "market" what is only a commodity in their eyes.

Over the years, similar complaints by Brinke Stevens, Linnea Quigley, etc., have only underscored the point. More than the interviews and cheesecake, I—and I hope your readers—get an appreciation of the hard work these women do, and how they end up getting screwed by the powers that try to determine their choices. Every article in this one issue touched on that in some way, be it the post of the "lesbian vampire" subgenre or Elizabeth Smail's retirement from erotic thrillers.

Keep up the fantastic work!

Thomas Inguirre
Madison, WI

I found your extensive article on Cynthia Rothrock interesting but, having been present at the very beginning of her film career, perhaps I can shed a bit more light. Ms. Rothrock's innate humility makes her foray into the film world seem very accidental but, in fact, it was planned somewhat earlier than your article states (and you probably knew she was too sharp to have just stumbled into this).

In 1984, I art-directed her first attempt at stardom: a low-budget private eye/martial arts opus called *SILENT KILL*. It was a co-production between Rothrock, her martial arts guru George Chung (conspicuously absent from the article, I noticed) and her acting coach, Dennis Sakamoto. Sakamoto scripted and directed, and Marty Collins



Looking up a ton in the weathering heat, Carolyn Taye-Loren only loses her cool over a *FF* write.

served as DP. It was Sakamoto's first attempt at directing although, as an actor, he was no stranger to action films. He still bears a scar from his on-screen fight with Sigourney Weaver in *EYEWITNESS*.

We shot for two weeks with partial financing on locations in Los Gatos, California and a number of small but detailed sets built in a warehouse nearby. Additional financing was to have come from Hong Kong. However, Chung and Sakamoto had a falling out in the middle of things and the additional financing failed to appear. Only a quarter of the film was shot and it remains in limbo. I left to work as a scenic artist on Alan Parker's *BIRDY* and, after a year, Ms. Rothrock tried again in Hong Kong where your article picks up. She was, at that time, still very unsure of herself as an actress, but those of us who worked on *SILENT KILL* could see the possibilities. More importantly, she had that patience and sense of fun which are so necessary for survival in the low-budget film realm,

where actresses work harder than they do anywhere else.

Stephen C. Wathen
Cupertino, CA

SKIN-DEEP

Just a note to let you (and your fine staff) know how much I enjoy *Femme Fatales*. I purchased the first 4 issues of your magazine from Bud Plant Comic Art, and have been a subscriber since Vol. 2:1.

I'd like to cast my vote to keep *FF* just the way it is. "Don't fix sumthin' that ain't broke," my old grandpappy used to say. The suggestive but modest poses of the featured femmes is just right. And as long as I'm repeating someone else's proverb, try this one on for size: "A woman's best weapon is a man's imagination."

Peter L. McMillan
Tracy, IA

FAN CLUBS

Send self-addressed and stamped envelopes.

Tina Desiree Berg: P.O. Box 1075, Van Nuys, CA 91409.

Mandy Leigh: East Coast femme fatale & Draculina mascot. 509 Douglas Avenue, Elizabeth, Pennsylvania 15007.

Theresa Lynn: See *FF* 4:2, *VAMPIRE VIKENS FROM VENUS*. P.O. Box 6057, Hoboken, New Jersey 07000.

J.J. North: P.O. Box 946, Jackson, New Jersey 08527.

Linnea Quigley: Order her books, *I'm Screaming As Fast As I Can* (\$15.96) and *Skin* (\$25), from Draculina Publishing, P.O. Box 969, Centralia, IL 62801.

Cynthia Rothrock: 4654-B East Avenue S, Suite 90, Palmdale, CA 93552.

Stella Stevens: c/o Stelevision, 1605 North Cahuenga Blvd., Hollywood, CA 90028.

F A T A L E

Coming this summer: A Special Edition of **ATTACK OF THE 60 FOOT CENTERFOLD** will be released as an Image Laserdisc. So just what makes it so special? Well, for starters, the complete cover story on the 60 FOOT CENTERFOLD (issue 3rd) has been scanned on the laserdisc to offer viewers the option of a behind-the-scenes chronicle. Another addendum is original test footage of Michelle Bauer, performing the title role against a bluescreen backdrop. There's also a running commentary by director Fred Olen Ray, in addition to on-screen introductions—to different supplemental sections—which feature Ray and supporting player Nello Fritz. The good takes on Image also loaded 250 still photos on the laserdisc, including "many interesting" shots of the CENTERFOLD sexpots.

● **Fatales** are still in a couple of vampire films that debuted at this year's Sundance Film Festival. Shot in black and white, **THE ADDICTION** offers Lil Taylor as a Ph.D. candidate; unfortunately, Taylor's NYU homework suffers a drawback when bloodsucking Annabella Sciorra does some serious business to her jugular. But Taylor, exclaiming herself to vampirism, attacks her studies—and victims—with a renewed vigor. Directed by Abel Ferrara, whose films have a habit of turning into cult classics (MS. 45, **BAD LIEUTENANT**, et al.), the film's cast includes Christopher Walken as a detective.

● Gorgeous newcomer Elise Lomaxson portrays NADJA, a vamp who's insatiable on changing her uncivilized lifestyle. Always the innovator, director Michael Alamedya shot certain scenes with a Fisher-Price PowerVision video camera. Remainder of the impressive cast includes Suzy Amis, Gekyup Graze, David Lynch and Peter Fonda as "hip vampire hunter, Dr. Van Helwig."

Both films are scheduled for a fall release.

● Production on wrapped on **ALIEN ESCAPE**, a "science fiction/sci-fi comedy/drama" starring Raelyn Saelman (see profile) and FF 4.2 centerfold Gail Harris; the supporting cast includes newcomers Yvette McGlendon and Heather Ward. Scott Harris, debuting as director, shot the

film in the L.A. National Forest. "The dailies look fabulous," notes Harris. "It's really a great little picture with something in it for everybody, including some semi-nude nudity. And, for a change, the women are heroes." Directors Fred Olen Ray and Jim Wynorski perform cameo roles as a couple of construction workers, whose public behavior is stereotypically raucous; in private, however, the blue collars are stripped off and the boys expound on philosophy and esoterics. A comedy team in the making? Well, there's a rumor that Ray and Wynorski are rehearsing their "Who's on First?" routine for the sequel.

● As a result of our article on "Asian Action Heroines" (FF 3 2), readers have inquired an expanded coverage of Oriental actresses. OK, our Hong Kong correspondent, Mike Leeder, is developing another installment. But, until Leeder delivers the goods, we recommend the California Pacific Entertainment annual calendar (twelve months of unforgettable Asian American Women). Candice Cenille, who's among the exquisitely photographed pin-ups, landed a weekly role on Fox's upcoming series, **THE MASKED RIDER** as "an independent young mother, resistant to the 'wet bride' [piece of jade] stereotypes." Price per calendar is \$11.95 (includes shipping and handling). The Image Dept., 11919 Culver

Bld., Suite 102, Los Angeles, CA 90088.

● And check-out the June/July issue of **A** magazine, writer Ken U speaks to Asian American actresses who've taken the B-movie plunges for better and for worse.

● Screeners cross our desk every day, but the shoe-in for this issue's true plug is **Scene on a Home Video**. The distributor, which recovers foreign films presumed to have been lost, recently purchased a couple of German imports: **JONATHAN, VAMPIRE OF THE NIGHT** (1969), which portrays Dracula as "a sadistic Hitler-fan," and **TENDERNESS OF THE WOLVES**, the taber Rainer Werner Fassbinder's chronicle of Fritz Hartmann (the murderer who influenced Fritz Lang's 1931 classic, *M*). The company's recent acquisition is indie's epic **GOD IS MY WITNESS**, which garnered a rave review: "Moves rarely offer more rip-roaring action per minute," from *The New York Times*. Scarecrow's slogan is, "We love movies" and we don't doubt their sincerity. Send inquiries to 9230 Rosevalley N.E., Seattle, WA 98105.

● Launching her career with a couple of horror films (**NIGHTMARE ON ELM STREET 3, BAD DREAMS**), Jennifer Rubin subconsciously plunged into a combination of innerman and art house fare like **THE DOORS**, **THE CRUSH** and **A WOMAN, HER MEN** and **HER FUTURE**. She recently renewed her ties with upstart genre film, approving the title role in Showtime's remake of **THE WASP WOMAN**. Rubin also wrapped **SCREAMERS**, an adaptation of Philip K. Dick's novel, *Second Variety*. Directed by Christian Duguay, who previously helmed **SCANNERS 2: THE NEW ORDER**, the film offers an apocalyptic vision of the year 2058. It seems blood-thirsty robots, demonstrating a flair for slaughtering human quarry, have conquered an entire planet. "Screamers" defines weapons that are utilized to combat the shape-shifting, mechanical monsters. Peter Weller (**ROBOCOP**) co-stars in the film, which is scheduled for an October release.

● Tanya Roberts, the former Charley's Angel and "erotic thriller" empress, recently approved a role in **V-**



Tanya Roberts, on the comeback trail, is shooting **VAMPIRE** DEVICE, a CD-ROM sequel to **UNDER A KILLING**

MOON KISS. J. J. North, better known as the 60 FOOT CENTERFOLD, co-stars in the film which director Donald Fanzar describes as "a sexy horror thriller in the tradition of **PLAY MISTY FOR ME**." Monique Parent, the saucy star of unmitigated thrillers who recently supported Julie Strain in **DARK SECRETS**, portrays a widow obsessed with her late millionaire husband. Stumbling upon his dead nigger, she wreaks havoc—via blackmail and murder—to keep her hubby's physical dose under literal lock and key. Supporting cast includes Thelma Lynn (**VAMPIRE VIKENS FROM VENUS**) and Gherty Chasun (**RED LIPS**). *Stalagmate* Entertainment, the outfit that produced Brigitte Nielsen's erotic thriller **COLD-PELLING EVIDENCE**, is funding the project. It seems that Farmer, a Jo Andy Studios, is developing a memory company. Lynn and Chasun have already signed-up for Farmer's next thriller, scheduled for an October start, tentatively titled **DEMOLITION HIGHWAY**. Meanwhile, Farmer is producing **RED LIPS 2: VAMPIRE EROTICA** with Chasun reprising her bloodlust role.

● Earlier this year, Monique Parent shared intimate moments with

Candice Cenille, composer for **ATTACK OF THE VAMPIRE**, debuts in **WET BEACH**, the "first black beach party musical."





A lesbian exotic resurfaces in **RED LIPS 2: VAMPIRE THROAT**; unfortunately, Michelle Bauer won't.

Tina's McClure in **THE RAVEN'S KISS**, "the story of a stripper who's gone too far." The youthful Ms. McClure, a veteran siren of the sizzler genre (**MIDNIGHT TEASE 2**, **REVENGE OF THE CALENDAR GIRLS**, **DEATH SIN**), plays Rachel, the hottest stripper in Vegas, who inherits \$2 million from her 60-year-old sugar daddy. She returns to her former cowboy lover, but that reunion is twisted into a sexual Mangle when they meet Kara Smith (Parent), a woman who's about to begin life as a stripper at Rachel's former club. The producers sold the film as "another B-movie cashing in on the wave of expensive stripper films like **STRIP TEASE** and **SHOWGIRLS**." Reviews from Carries, where the film premiered, drained the cash. Director Gary Dean Davis claims, "Tina was about to lose her father [actor Doug McClure] to cancer, and here we are in the middle of this vast empty desert and she's playing a character who's losing everything of value in her life. In the climactic scene when she's on the top of the sand dune crying, she's really crying."

One of the labels to create the trend of B-movie burlesque is **LOVE ON THE RUN**, all about "a man, falsely accused of dealing drugs, who meets up with Gilly, an Angel City stripper, with a little help from Lolita, the club's sweetheart stripper, the couple realize their initial salvation." Directed and written by Gregor Ogden, the cast in-

cludes Deborah Detch and Lorelei Ashley.

Simple Steve Sallivari's book, **Ve Va Voom!**, for a comprehensive chronicle of authentic strippers and pin-up models. Over 100 women were interviewed for the 266-page trade paperback, including June Wilkinson (FF 3.1), Mamie Van Doren, Blaise Starr, Lil' St. Cyr, and others. Price per book is \$17.95 (\$24.97 CAN). You can order by telephone 1-800-937-5557, extension 62.

Linnea Quigley and Steve Lasker, respectively the star and director of **JACKO** (formerly **JACK O' LANTERN**), have been awarded for **DEATH MASK**. Described as an "erotic fusion of POSSESSED BY THE NIGHT and NIGHTMARE ALLEY," the setting of the Florida-based production is a carnival sideshow. Character actor James Best (**THE CAINE MUTINY**, **SOUNDER**) portrays "a sculptor of ornate masks" who strikes a deal with Satan, whenever he applies a certain mask to his own face, Best transforms into a handsome devil. Unfortunately, the "false face," which literally becomes a part of Best, feeds his psyche with evil impulses. Quigley, as an aspiring ballerina, joins the carnal circuit as a sideshow dancer. "I'm shooting **DEATH MASK** between June 10th and July 1st," notes Quigley. "Meanwhile, I'm recording a song with Becky and Billy Woo. It's kind of a Go-Gotz tune. By the way, I'd like to make a correction. In **FF 4.1**, I said I had **LAST SATURDAY NIGHT SPECIAL** to the director's girlfriend; this is a grievous error I found out, in truth, that the actress who landed the role was someone with whom the company had been accustomed to working. Her casting was producer Roger Corman's call."

Lorise McCormack (**FF 3.3**), who was recently cast in a multitude of genre roles (**PIRANHA**, **DROID GUNNER**, **SINFUL INTRIGUE**), stars in **LIP DANCING**. "I play this naive, small town girl who goes to Hollywood to become an actress," explains McCormack. "Facing an auction, the girl works in a strip club and experiences a sexual awakening." Director Mike Sena (**MARRIED PEOPLE**, **SINGLE SEX**) refers to his film as "FLASH-DANCE meets **9 1/2 WEEKS**." Tribeca Entertainment, which produced in collaboration with Playboy Productions, is spearheading a Fall release. The supporting cast includes Tina McClure (see separate submission on **THE RAVEN'S KISS**) and Kim Dawson. McCormack also wrapped a role in a winning Lolita in **TIGER HEART**. "It's a very boppier movie. Unlike my other

F E M A L E

Welcoming to a new FF installment that will chronicle the latest developments in the multi-media. We'll enlighten you to electronic entertainment (software, CD-ROM) that involves a mouse-driven communion with futuristic devices. After all, a myriad of pulsating video games have been cast with B-film luminaries. Example: Lisa Cornshaw (**FF 3.2**) performs a digitized striptease in **Vase Sinner's CYBER PEER**. ("Virtual Babes Speak to You Live from Cyber Space!") The same company delivered **Monique Parent**, another "erotic thriller" repertory player, as a secretary in **SPY GLASS** naturally, a multitude of dialogue choices will prompt her character to frigidly respond or shed her shirt. Dana Ward, who "retired" from **DIFFERENT STROKES** moped to R-rated provocateur, appeared in **NIGHT TRAP**; a video game that served-up "society bans" to a tribe of vampires; sales were anemic until a hard-core public, repulsed by the negligees and carnage, insisted on its removal from store shelves. The controversy promptly boosted sales and the game has been released in some one score (it took that little to last two 60 seconds).

But actresses, appropriating the A-film level, are partaking in CD-ROM extravaganzas that stray from titillation and challenge players to strategically or combatively interact. **The Carriers**, Stephanie Seymour, Morgan Fairchild and Cassandra Peterson are among the actresses whose prominent faces—not to mention nipples—have persuaded them to make the medium. "I was in one of the pre-

cursor of the interactive video games," recalls Tina Desires Berg. "It was called **GRAND PLEX TRACING**. I was the 'trophy girl' who either congratulated you or told you to try again. It was about 4 years ago by Philips, the pioneers in the CD-ROM field. Since then, the technology has become incredibly sophisticated. Forget home video; interactive is the market of the near future. It's very likely that major studios will get a big piece of the pie. As a result, bigger celebrities will be attached for 'boxoffice' value. Of course, following the scenario that's already transpired with conventional 2-D movies, the independents will get squeezed out in the process."

We'll also document female title-related merchandising as manifested in print and plastic. Of course, we invite your contribution to this spread. On with the show—

BIM INTERACTIVE GAMES

Access Software's **UNDER A KILLING MOON**, interactive tongue-in-cheek film noir that merged **Bege** and **BLADE RUNNER**, is preparing a sequel. **MOON** offered an impressive cast of character actors mingling in the mutant, apocalyptic district of San Francisco: Margot Kidder, Brian Keith, Russell Means and James Earl Jones, the latter audibly misrepresented as the disembodied Big P. In **the Sky**. The second installment, **PANDORA DEVICE**, will be on the shelves in a couple of months. Tanya Roberts, former Charlie's Angel and Band Girl (**A VIEW TO KILL**), is cast as Megan Madison. We're betting her character will be the love interest for Tex Murphy, the chain-smoking, whiskey-soaked P.I. who, before making his CD-ROM debut in **MOON**, sleuthed in two other Access games, **MEAN STREETS** and **MARTIAN MEMORANDUM**. Murphy will also be grilling nightclub singer "Lucky Lucy," a new female sleuth on the block played by Nicole Tyson. Suzanne Barnes will reprise her MOON role as Chelsea Blando.

Julie Strain, cast as Beverly Hills madam Heidi Fleiss, describes **HEIDI'S HOUSE** as "tort and fun." This is CD-ROM entertainment with comedy. I have a little domestic scene and I get a little stern with—well, the camera is the person I'm interacting with. It's really cute and the title itself was so great, I just

The **REINFORCE** movie, set for a Russian shoot, is far from scrubbed. Lorie Hamilton will play Dawn Harter.



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The Barbi Twins play themselves in an interactive video game. Also on top, a sexy CD-ROM, serving as a "cover chronicle" of the duo, will be released by Orion.

had to do it." Strain admits she has reservations regarding real-life controversies that may be probed for desktop recreation. "I don't know if I'd go so far as to make 'D.J. THE CD-ROM GAME.' The Heidi Pitlor seemed like fun enough, you know what I mean?"

As JOHNNY MNEMONIC's surrealism in the Sony CD-ROM spin-off of the movie, Strain really pushed the alarm button. "It's this big, bad bodyguard with a patch across my face," she laughs. "My hair's all slicked back with a big ponytail coming out the top. It's pretty weird. There were a lot of fights—in fact, it's the most fighting I've ever done on a project. A trainer was on the set for consultation on the numerous kung-fu and karate-type moves. They trained me to do a lot of kicks! Look, casting directors don't cast me as the girl-next-door. I'm 6'1", big and bad. I don't get to carry a purse or get named or anything like that."

Strain notes that performing in a CD-ROM environment is somewhat akin to acting without a vacuum: "Most of it involves two of three actors working in front of a blue screen. But some of the fighting in JOHNNY MNEMONIC was shot in an actual courtyard. See, you have four options of where you can go with a certain action scene. As an example, in one fight scene, I'd smack the heroine and I'd win. Gone over. But she's triumphant in an alternate version. The fate of these characters depends on the

skill of the player. Overall, over two hours of footage was recorded on high-definition video. Betacams CD-ROM is really a really high-tech world and I'm very excited to be involved with it."

While the feature-length JOHNNY MNEMONIC earned mixed reviews and a disappointing boxoffice gross, the game scored a "rave" from *Newsday* onto Joseph Gelinas. Comparing the Karina Reeves movie to its CD-ROM counterpart, Gelinas gauged the latter as "the more culturally significant event." The game, which closely adheres to author William Gibson's bleak cyberpunk vision, premiered in stores three days before the film nationally debuted.

The Barbi Twins, whose Play-boy front cover has grabbed the magazine's best-selling issue, were hostesses for Sega's International Kickoff. They flew to London for

the premiere of SATURN, the company's revolutionary new game. But, beyond this tidbit, I'm sworn to secrecy," whispers Sherry Barbi. "It's similar, in concept, to Nintendo except it's way out there. That's all I can say until next time." So we had little to talk about excepting a saturation of Barbi Twins te-ns, including an interactive adventure game and Orion's forthcoming CD-ROM, the latter loaded up with sexy shots of Sherry and her sister, Sia. The barbitizing twins will also be rendered as "espionage action heroines" in a "fudge come book. Then there's a Barbi pinball machine... a line on the Internet... and The Barbi Twins Book of Nudes. (Buy now, the initial run of 20,000 copies are bound in leather.)

FF cover women Rebecca Ferretti (24) and Lorise McGomas (33) have been cast in THE MIS-ADVENTURES OF JAMES SPAWN. Originally produced as THE RING, Ferretti portrays a model on the Internet... and The Barbi Twins Book of Nudes. (Buy now, the initial run of 20,000 copies are bound in leather.)

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Originally introduced in Germany, REALMS OF ARKANIA-STAR TRAIL has collected awards since its arrival in America. If you're pretty sick of branded shoot-'em-ups, here's a remedy. The premise involves footbathy adventurers



Players are invited to hire female mercenaries in Sci-Tech's STAR TRAIL, voiced by "Best Bare Playing Game."

who arrive in a province occupied by feuding elves, dwarves and bloodthirsty Orcs. Central to the mission is recovering a gem of mysterious powers called the Salm-mander Stone. Along with a smooth-scrolling 16-bit-of-the-arts graphics engine, the game offers digitized speech and fully-animated, realistic 3-D combat. Not to mention monsters and 60 different spells. Better yet, you can choose from a variety of traveling companions, including sword-wielding Karina (she'll aid your party for a certain price) and Helen, whom you must save from her joy dungeon prison.

Write Sci-Tech Software for a catalogue, P.O. Box 245, Ogdenburg Business Center, Suite 2E, Ogdenburg, New York—13659. Sci-Tech's JAGGED ALLIANCE has also earned rave reviews. This pulse-pounding opera with a dead ring for Ernest Hemingway, and a thigh-bam! babes who reminded us of Karina Lombard, directly ad-

continued on page 12



Left: Blue screen photography was utilized to merge Helen's scenes in UNDER A WILLOW MOON, below, a lesser set (below) was optically blended in.



Strain sports the Brooks Shields pictorial recently printed in *Details*. Facing: Keefe Egan's exclusive rendering of Strain as Fekik-ii; her sword n' sorcery heroine will surface in *Heavy Metal*, as well as the magazine's music split-off.

UNRESTRAINED

SEX SYMBOL CONFESSIONS

JULIE STRAIN'S CHRONICLE OF
HER "WONDER YEARS"—AND A
PREVIEW OF *HEAVY METAL II*.

BY JULIE STRAIN

OK, you want the scoop?—y'know—the goods, the inside dirt?? OK, baby, you asked for it. Mmm, hold on to your seats. Women, hold on to your men...right!

Yes, it's true I did, indeed, bribe a friend to help me steal a horse. The payoff: a bag of Chicklets. My accomplice and I were no older than seven years when we united as criminal cohorts. But we were caught red-handed. A mutt, who answered to the name of Pub, appeared at the scene of the crime. As Pub wagged his tail, we abandoned the heist and plowed through a thick patch of blackberry bushes, somehow, my arms and legs circumvented telltale scrapes and scars.

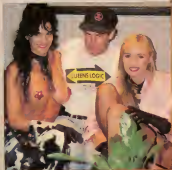
While we're on the subject of guns, let's move on to my adolescence; I was a pretty big drink of water as a teenager, and my mother got pretty sick of me beefing about my height. She pitched the surgical extraction of a bone in my leg to reduce my "overgrowth." Yeah, great. Imagine me now if yours truly hadn't blown-off that clinker, I'd be stuck in a pair of black thigh highs that would be stretching up to my ass. Re-ahzing nothing could curtail the routine "How's the air up there?" wisecracks, I resolved to launch my first year in high school as a 13-year-old, six-foot pupil. Could have been worse. Earlier in the summer, after graduating from eighth grade, I succumbed to a bad Afro perm which nearly had to be surgically removed. Cute was not the word for me. Does "late bloomer" mean anything to ya?

Before enrolling in high school, I spent three years





Strala poses for a sculpted likeness of her Heavy Metal character; Savanline Entertainment will release a Fall-8 reunion bill to Strala with the theme's magazine debut. Jason Strala, producer Dave Andrade & unidentified player on the set of PSYCHO COP II.



at the local Christian Academy. Weighing in approximately 30 lbs. less than I currently support, yours truly was virtuous for a good three years plus. (Thanks, Mom—did you plan on that? Maybe Mother was smarter than I thought—but, then again, she's the one who gave me the perm. Equally damning was the Dorothy Hamill haircut. But that's another story).

You may be asking yourself, "Julie, how did you—from grades six to eight—get stuck in such a rigid, despotic environment?" Well, even back then I was the same smartass I am today. I skipped up a grade midway through the fourth year in elementary school; after Christmas vacation, I was promoted to the fifth grade. The other students were less than congratulatory; matter of fact, jealous kids greeted me with death threats and physical intimidation. As a defense mechanism, I turned anti-establishment. Demonstrating my anarchic attitude, I marched into the chicks' lavatory and tossed a lit match inside a tall, white garbage can. Smoke, fire alarms, big red tracks with hooks and ladders. Making an early and organized exodus from the school, the kids—abruptly relieved of all third period duties—lined up on the backfield to watch the action. Me, I was declared the Bag Lady on Campus, the heroine of Larkey Elementary. Unfortunately, my rebellious flair landed me that three-year gig at the more disciplinary Walnut Creek Christian Academy.

But even the Academy couldn't curb my subversive streak. It's likely that students, perusing through *National Geographic* magazines, may have noticed my "embellishments" (four-letter words, applied to every other page, just seemed to roll out of my pen). Then there was the Hangin' Titties (mine); they were occasionally on exhibit while the class was

"The students were less than congratulatory about my academic promotion. Jealous kids greeted me with death threats. Defensively I turned anti-establishment."



James Gailley celebrates the marriage of *Heavy Metal* publisher Kevin Eastman and Strain; the couple will be the front in early August.

supposed to be memorizing 27 lines of verse (yeah, right. I mean, I flashed 'em, even if they weren't visible to anyone else but myself). I also showed a direct violation of the mall polish ban; black, green and purple were my colors. As I sat by the window, gazing at the kids enjoying their recreational period, the teacher scraped my nails with scissors in an effort to erase the "controlled substance."

I'll bet ya want to bear more. But I'm tired, I've got a blister on my finger and there's a white dress in the store window across the street that's beckoning. So you're just gonna have to wait. Next time, I'll be enlightening you to a shocking new development in my personal life. Until next issue, God bless.

Postscript: Feast—The editor is on a coffee break? Good. I nearly signed off without shamelessly plugging my photo book *Julie Strain: It's Only Art If It's Well Hung*. It's 96-pages of uncensored Strain! The

Deluxe edition will debut no less than 86 steamy pics! Can I be any less subtle? You bet! Virtuous photographers (including Helmut Newton, David Laundy and Sam Maxwell) snapped tons of full-color spreads, moody, erotic b&w pix and sensuous septa prints. Published by Heavy Metal Books, the volume is a steal at \$24.95. For ordering information, dial-up 212-274-8462. Did I mention the book also offers an exclusive gallery of 18 master strokes rendered by pin-up princess Olivia which—Whoops, I hear the editor's footsteps.

The Julie Strain Bulletin Board.

"I'm not bad—I'm just drawn that way."

Ms. Strain will be rendered as a "cartoon cut-throat" in *HEAVY METAL II*. The full-length animated feature, currently in pre-production, has been described as "a surfeit of bad attitudes, with homage paid to MAD MAX, TERMINATOR and LA FEMME NIKI-

TA." Creator Kevin Eastman claims the violent content of the film "is something akin to the combined psyches of Sam Peckinpah and John Woo spilling all over the screen." Fakk-II, a hardboiled femme fatale rendered in a likeness of Strain, will surface in each story of the film anthology. The heroine was conceptualized by Eastman and further developed by Strain and artist Simon Bisley. "The character I created was only half done and needed a lot of work around the time I met Julie," explains Eastman. "Julie is Fakk-II, she made it whole. We've reworked the entire story together and designed the bottle gear, which will actually be built for use in the comic—for capturing the exact likeness of Julie—as well as for live appearances! Fakk-II will make her *Heavy Metal* print debut in early '96 with a 48-page cover story. The basic Fakk-II storyline will be expanded for the *HEAVY METAL II* movie," continues Eastman, "and will include many popular characters from the magazine. Unlike Tarna, the female lead in the first *HEAVY METAL* movie who was visible only in the concluding 'Loc Nar' episode, Julie's Fakk-II will be the sequel's driving force from the opening to end credits."

Eastman also revealed that 1981's *HEAVY METAL* movie will finally premiere on video shelves in late '96 or early '97. "Dialogue between *Heavy Metal* magazine and Columbia-Tristar Video is on track to co-promote the release. *HEAVY METAL*'s transfer to video has been in limbo, during the past 15 years, as a result of legal conflicts involving music rights. But we're working out the details so we can issue the event as a director's cut—you know, restoring finished footage that was cut out of the film's theatrical release, and adding countless pencil test footage of never completed but equally astounding work." □

Shakespeare & Sex Appeal

UNLIKE PAST *WITCHBOARD* HEROINES, PART III'S LOCKY LAMBERT DEEPENS THE SCRIPT—AND KICKS SATANIC BUTT.

BY CATHERINE CARSON

The plot, completely unpretentious: Tawny Kitaen, who cooked as "The Girl" in then-husband David Coverdale's Whitesnake videos, was cast as bride-to-be who's obsessed with a ouija board; by the film's conclusion, she's inhabited by the artifact's manipulative, supernatural host. Produced on a \$2.3 million investment, *WITCHBOARD* grossed over \$8 million. Though proclaimed the sleeper of 1986, a sequel didn't materialize until seven years later. *WITCHBOARD II: THE DEVIL'S DOORWAY* offered Ami Dolenz, a youthful genre veteran (*PUMPKINHEAD II*, *TICKS*), as an artist who rents an apartment and communicates with its marauding tenant via a ouija board. The film failed unimpressive video sales after a limited theatrical release. The third *WITCHBOARD* installment was scripted and photographed less than two years after the release of its predecessor. The film's



WITCHBOARD III. She may appear to be in peril but, notes Lambert, "I save the day" (shoot the evil spirit with a crossbow, exploding him into special effects debris.)

leading lady will be much less familiar to audiences than the predictable encore of the "ouija board" prop. But, unlike her precursors, Locky Lambert was active beyond the obligations of just a hired actress.

The shadow of poverty prompts a man to open hell's window. Summoning a malignant entity from its ouija board dwelling, the mortal

negotiates for financial prosperity. But the demon, no Wall Streeter, incrementally divests the conjurer of his soul. Initially, the man's wife is blinded to her spouse's spiritual descent. But, once enlightened to the beast's chicanery, she kicks Satanic butt in the film's showdown.

"There's a huge, climactic fight scene in *WITCH-*

BOARD III: THE POSSESSION," Locky Lambert smiles. "I shoot the evil spirit with a crossbow. He explodes everywhere, disintegrating into special effect debris. My character, Julie, saves the day. It's the chance of a lifetime."

Lambert not only exercised a genre platitude by turning into her husband's rescuer, but contributed to the film's scenario. "We were lucky to have a director who enabled us to personalize the film," she explains. "They had just finished rewriting the script when I came on board, deepening it and kind of turning it into a *ROSEMARY'S BABY*." Indeed, director Peter Svatek, whom Lambert describes as an "actor's dream," welcomed the creative input of the cast. "If I was having a problem, Peter would say two words to me and it would just click, especially in more difficult, emotional scenes."

It's not every day that an actor is invited to embellish his/her character, and Lambert doesn't underestimate the privilege "Julie," she



Lambert, posing for FF photographer Jan Dine, relished the goal of the *WITCHBOARD III* reventaz: "The basis for a good film is a good plot and good characters—then add on all the fantasy and special effects."



proudly grins, "is very assertive, important and intricate to the plot. So often I've played the victim, the girlfriend or the put-upon wife. Where women are so often portrayed as weak and inferior, it's been a blessing having the chance to play a role of empowerment."

Though a lean year for horror films, Lambert's genre debut turned a profit at this year's Cannes Film Festival. "It turns out the Europeans loved *WITCHBOARD III*," she grins. "It nearly sold out at the market!"

The film opens with an introduction to Brian (David Neuman) and Julie, a young, married couple who are financially strapped. It seems Brian has made more bad investments than your average CBS stockholder. Seduced by the ouija board's vernal influence, Brian negotiates a get-rich-quick scheme with "the other side." Eventually surrendering to Kral, the demonic chairman of the board, Brian bargains his soul. It's up to Julie to break her hubby's stocks and bonds with the Satanic emissary.

"They've lost their house, their car, everything," summarizes Lambert. "After Brian loses his stockbroker job, he becomes very depressed and down on himself. Meanwhile, Julie continues working as an anthropology professor. They're still very much in love, despite all the hardships."

"It's brought to Julie's attention that something strange is going on. She begins to notice changes in her husband, especially his personality. Yet, she has no idea he's using the ouija board."

The script, frequently altered before production, applied credibility to the couple's relationship. "We had quite a bit of fun reshaping and rewriting the screenplay for specific needs. We wanted to have a real solid storyline and characters, in addition to the other stuff. This is the basis for any good film; good plot and good characters—then add



Behind-the-scenes, Lambert practices her ventriloquism with a WITCHBOARD III exoskeleton. Though a last-year for her, the film lifted huge sales at Cannes.

on all the fantasy and special effects. We wanted something a little more memorable.

"I was fortunate, the lead actor and myself had a good rapport. The chemistry is obvious. The viewer should really care about the characters. In one scene, realizing that her husband has been possessed by a demon, my character is afraid she may have become pregnant. I mean, she *needs* to get a pregnancy test, you can just see the sweat pouring down."

The only American on the set, Lambert relates WITCHBOARD III "was shot entirely on location in Montreal, Canada. The city provided us with some great architecture and beautiful exterior shots. A museum interior was photographed in one sequence. We were near this huge dinosaur skeleton and all this light was filtering through... just beautiful." Scenes of Lambert, teaching anthropology, were shot at the University of Montreal.

The film's producers have encouraged Lambert to pitch a story concept for Part 4: "We were at the market toying around with the idea that maybe she is pregnant with a demon child, and we'll go on from there. I've been doing a lot of research, renting all these genre movies, and I'm very surprised at some films... specifically, how un-

satisfying they are. They might have been produced on a bigger budget than we had but, as far as the basic structure, there's not really much to speak about. I feel very confident and excited that we can come up with something much better." Lambert is very comfortable in the driver's seat, since writing affords her the opportunity to navigate the paths and psyches of her characters. "It's empowerment," she exclaims, "and not just in being female but also being an actor, which is so often a passive state—you wait for the phone to ring."

"Through the writing, I want to incorporate all the characteristics that are required for this genre and, of course, one of them is a bit of eroticism. There is this whole thing about exploita-

LOCKY LAMBERT

"So often I've played the victim, the girlfriend or the put-upon wife. Where women are so often portrayed as weak and inferior, it's a blessing to play a role of empowerment."

tion. What is erotic? What is exploitive? So I've become very challenged with that. Since I'll be starring in it, I find myself thinking, 'If there's going to be nudity, it damn well better be necessary.' I want it to be beautiful and artistic."

The love scenes in WITCHBOARD III were subdued. "It's a husband and wife who are very much in love," she explains. "We had dialogue between us that only a husband and wife would have between each other. I think it was very tasteful." Both love scenes, in fact, offer insight into the husband's personality changes. Initially depicted as a very gentle, romantic spouse, Brian's possession—in the second lovemaking scene—is manifested by lust civilized sex. "He's very rough and savage," notes Lambert. "It's kind of exciting for Julie, but also it's very different. These scenes are titillating without going over the line. A little bit of titillation is alright, but I don't want it to distract from what's going on."

A college graduate with a degree in literature, Lambert's acting aspirations

prompted her enrollment at the London Academy of Music and Dramatic Arts. "I always did theatre on the side, I never got it out of my system," smiles Lambert, a natural born ham who attended dancing classes as a youth. Initially, Lambert's family refused to support her acting goals. "Parents are meant to be practical," she sighs, "—and they worry."

Upon graduating from the Academy, Lambert resumed her studies and stage work in New York. Aiming for Shakespearean legitimacy, she "aspired to this lofty, classical style. Then reality hit; you can't make a lot of money doing it." Traveling west, she landed a string of roles in made-for-TV movies (THE PICK-UP, A FRIEND TO DIE FOR, RELENTLESS) and a gig as a recurrent character on ABC's LIFE GOES ON.

Lambert's encounter with Susan Fleetwood, an English actress and a member of the Royal Shakespeare Company, kindles her fondest memories. Fleetwood spoke at an Academy seminar during Lambert's apprenticeship. "Susan laughed so much and it helped me, because I was still trying to find out who I was," recalls Lambert. "I pointed it out to her—'You are laughter so much.' She thought it was funny that I even asked. To her, the laughter was an unconscious thing. I connected to that and thought, 'Wow! How free she was and full of life!' It opened my eyes to what being an actor was. Letting the life bubble forth from you, to be free and relaxed about using myself. I learned that really great acting comes from that unnameable thing inside us that we're gifted with." □

Lambert describes Peter Svatek (left), director of WITCHBOARD III, as "an actor's dream, especially with the more difficult, emotional scenes."



VALERIE LEON UNWRAPPED

BEGUILING IN *BLOOD FROM THE MUMMY'S TOMB*, THE BRIT BOMBSHELL NIXED NUDITY.

By ALAN JONES



"I really wanted to be Vanessa Redgrave, but I was never trained for that sort of classical acting. I just fell into the film business, with no clear direction about where I ultimately wanted to go. But I kept working consistently and was having a glorious time, so it didn't seem to matter. All that I knew was I loved show biz..."

So speaks auburn-haired, blue-eyed actress Valerie Leon, reviewing her career as one of Britain's premiere bombshells. Mention her name and Hammer's *BLOOD FROM THE MUMMY'S TOMB* promptly springs to mind. But cult admiration for the 1971 horror film has pigeonholed Leon's familiarity into that single role, excluding acknowledgement of her non-Hammer work. As an example, Leon was featured in six *CARRY ON* movies, those much-revered British bastions of low-brow comedy. She's also the only thespian to support two James Bonds, specifically Roger Moore in *THE SPY WHO*

"Distributors were disappointed by *BLOODMUMMY 5 TOMB*. They wanted a traditional mystery, not a dead Egyptian queen reincarnated as a modern gal."



Left: Flaming lessons were obligatory for NEVER SAY NEVER AGAIN. Right: BLOOD FROM THE MUMMY'S TOMB, which on the set of a British double bill, was presented in the U.S. with art of Leon (top).





LOVED ME and Sean Connery in NEVER SAY NEVER AGAIN, the latter her final film to date.

There was a time you simply couldn't avoid Valerie Leon, even, for whatever nebulous reason, if you tried to. Her frequent TV roles included stints on THE SAINT, THE PERSUADERS, SPACE 1999 and THE AVENGERS. Film assignments oscillated from pratfall comedy (1967's SMASHING TIME) to action-adventure (1978's THE WILD GEESE). Leon's public persona further increased as a result of her visibility in a landmark ad campaign for Hai Karate aftershave (one whiff and sultry Leon falls for a wimp, who has no choice but to fend-off her passionate advances with kung-fu fighting). Her golden era bridged two decades, the swingin' '60s and sex-shrouded '70s; it's a pampered period that Leon recounts with both bewilderment and a tinge of wistfulness. "When I look back, I realize how lucky I was then. You couldn't have the same kind of career today. It took a while for me to suss out, but I created that sexy image and it paid off for me."

But the "image" was still a few years from crystallization when the stagestruck Leon, then a trainee fashion buyer for Harrods department store, joined actress Eleanor Bron to croon some Christmas carols. "We got chatting and I told her how much I enjoyed singing," recalls Leon. "She recommended I go to her teacher for lessons, and I was hooked. I started reading The Stage newspaper, and answered an advertisement for a chorus line job with a touring company of BELLE OF NEW YORK. I played truant from work and went to audition. Incredibly, I got the job and, to this day, I have no idea why. Okay, I was pretty, but I stuck out like a sore thumb as I was at least a foot taller than the rest. My height has always singled me out as I'm

"I started wearing a cleavage brassiere and tight sweaters to devastating effect. I created this sexpot image. It wasn't me, but it worked for casting directors."



"I believe suggestion is more erotic than showing everything." Posing for a 1994 photo shoot, Leon preps for a comeback.



just under 5 feet, 11 inches without shoes."

Leon ditched her Harrods job to pursue her theatrical dreams, but was devastated when the tour was cancelled after only eight weeks. Upon applying for a position as the D'Oyly Carte Opera Company's dresser, Leon contracted Central Casting

for lucrative extra work. "I did quite a lot of crowd scenes and, after a while, began getting picked-out for the odd line or two in the comedies THE SANDWICH MAN and THAT RIVIERA TOUCH." Leon was back on the boards in 1966, performing as a showgirl in Barbara Streisand's London produc-

tion of FUNNY GIRL, she vocalized a couple of stage lines. "You know," Leon smiles, "I was really green. I had a fairly repressed upbringing. I didn't really live when I was young. It was the '60s, but I was never part of that scene. I'm a bit sad about that now."

Nevertheless, Leon's parents endorsed her burgeoning career. "My mother went to RADA [Royal Academy of Dramatic Arts] and would have loved to have been an actress, but she chose marriage instead. My father must have been proud of me. Although I entered the business just before he died, one birthday he engaged a press cuttings service for me as a present. That showed me he had a tremendous amount of faith in me, though I didn't receive much publicity around this time."

Leon was a beneficiary of the hype generated by Streisand's London premiere. She was initially offered the small role in such potboiling, homegrown British fare as MISTER TEN PERCENT and CARRY ON UP THE KHYBER. But it was a movie, destined never to see the light of day, that altered Leon's professional outlook: "Seth Heist directed a comedy called MONSIEUR LE CDQ in 1967. I was covering for Julie Newmar, as a bride in the church, when the lead

actor—I can't remember who he was now—gave me the once over and told me to wuss up and accentuate my best assets. From that moment on, I started wearing a cleavage brassiere and tight sweaters to devastating effect. I created this sexpot image which wasn't me, but it sure worked for casting directors."

Though her wardrobe stressed curves and cleavage, Leon adhered to her "Everything but the apple" motto. "I never stripped, not even in the softcore sci-fi

07 STAGE



Li Leon (far left) poses with "Bond babes" on THE SPY WHO LOVED ME soundstage. If, though, we could do her SPY role, a bikini was a requisite for p.p. pic.

ZETA ONE (1969)," says Leon. "I did three movies where everyone was naked except for me. I kept my clothes on, which was quite bizarre. I lost a lot of work by not disrobing completely. I think it was shyness. I built a wall around myself and became unapproachable—it was the only way I know how to handle my lack of confidence. An uncle of mine once said to me, 'You know Valerie, I never over thought of you as sexy,' and he was probably right because it was nothing more than a well-fabricated im-

ago." But the facade expedited Leon's on-screen exposure; within a single year (1969-'70), she was cast in such eclectic fare as CAREY ON DOCTOR, THE MAN WHO HAD POWER OVER WOMEN, CAREY ON CAMPING, THE ITALIAN JOB, THE RISE AND RISE OF MICHAEL RIMMER, ALL THE WAY UP, A PROMISE OF BED AND CAREY ON UP THE JUNGLE. By 1971, Leon was groomed as a bona fide Hammer heroine for BLOOD FROM THE MUMMY'S TOMB, adapted from

Jewel of the Seven Stars, a lesser-known story by Dracula author Bram Stoker. Director Seth Holt died a few days before production wrapped. Hammer kingpin Michael Carreras helmed the remainder of the script. Leon played dual roles as Queen Tera, the mummified Egyptian sovereign who terminates the defilers of her tomb, and Margaret, the 20th-century reincarnate of the vengeful mummy. The veteran cast included Andrew Kier (DRACULA HAS RISEN FROM THE GRAVE), George Coulouris (CITIZEN KANE), James Villiers (THE RULING CLASS) and Ronald Crutchley (THE HAUNTING).

"It was just another job," Leon relates. "I went to an open casting call and I have no idea if Seth Holt remembered me from the aborted MONSIEUR LE COQ. It was my first leading role and it freaked me out in a way. I wasn't social at all while we were making it. I hid in my dressing room during lunch breaks, and didn't mix with the rest of the cast and crew at all. There was work to be done." Holt's abrupt demise shocked the production

team. "He had these terrible hiccups for a week," sighs Leon, "and everyone thought it was enormously funny. We'd sit watching rushes, he'd suddenly hiccup and we'd all burst out laughing. Then his heart gave out because of the strain. It was awful. I was so upset when they wouldn't let me go to the funeral. I remember crying a lot and looking very grim in the first scenes shot by Michael Carreras."

"It was clear when we were shooting with Seth that he had very definite ideas in his mind. All his directions were very precise with regards to me running through the undergrowth, getting my clothes torn off or my hair blowing out behind me in a dream sequence. One thing he had me do, which I hated, was being shot in the tomb. I've never felt so spooked as the coffin lid was put on top of me. I kept thinking, 'What if there's a fire and they leave me here trapped?' Everything changed when Seth died because his editing point-of-view was missing."

And, according to Leon, Holt's disengagement from genre clichés may have im-

BLOODMONEY'S TOMB: "Seth Holt's direction was very precise regarding me running into undergrowth, getting my clothes torn off, in a dream sequence."



periled the film's commercial success. "Distributors were very disappointed by it," she explains. "They wanted a traditional mummy wrapped in bandages, not a dead Egyptian queen reincarnated as a modern girl. It wasn't what they had hoped for. Seth's ideas obviously didn't fit the market for horror at the time. Maybe that's why it has become a cult movie."

British exhibitors were so disappointed in MUMMY'S TOMB that the film was dumped on the bottom half of a double-bill with DR. JEKYLL AND HESTER HYDE. And Hammer executives were dismayed with Leon. "I refused to show too much in any of the publicity shots that I did," she says. "I was a disaster on the Hammer 'glamour queen' front because I didn't bare all. I've always believed suggestion is more erotic than showing everything, anyway. There is a nude rear shot of Margaret getting out of bed in BLOOD FROM THE MUMMY'S TOMB. But it isn't me, it's a body double." Significantly, though she earned glowing reviews as a "Hammer discovery," Leon never again worked for England's "House of Horror."

But the experience hardly ruffled the actress. Between movie and stage gigs, Leon was photographed at glittering movie premieres with her "glamour rival" Imogen Hassall (WHEN DINOSAURS RULED THE EARTH). "She had even bigger cleavage than me!" laughs Leon. While recording an episode of the popular Brit sitcom UP Pompeii, Leon met Michael Mills, the BBC head of comedy whom she married in 1974. Though Mills was 25 years her senior, Leon acknowledges, "I think I was looking for a father figure to look after me. I was quite neurotic at the time and he used to keep me calm." Mills died in 1985, leaving Leon with teenage son Leon (Leon Mills, not Leon Leon) and daughter Merope (pro-



Hammer Films underestimated BLOOD FROM THE MUMMY'S TOMB; adapted from Bruce Sticker's novel of the 7 Sisters, the film is declared a cult classic. Leon "would love to appear" in the rumored remake of Sticker's story.

nounced Morrow-Peel).

Subsequently hired as a decorative presence, Leon in her post-MUMMY roles appeared in bawdy comedies—SEX PLEASE, WE'RE BRITISH (1973), CAN YOU KEEP IT UP FOR A WEEK? (1974), THE UPS AND DOWNS OF A HANDYMAN (1976) and a certain low-budget spoof of a 1933 classic. "I played a High Priestess in QUEEN KONG (1976), and looked great," grins Leon. "I should have played more evil parts. I was always getting cast as the dumb brunette, which hampered my career." One predictable question ("Which role qualifies as your favorite?") draws an unpredictable answer: "CARRY ON GIRLS (1973). It was so much fun. I started off very plain and ugly with glasses, and was thoroughly transformed into a beautiful model. I have very

"I refused to show too much in any of the publicity shots I did," said Leon. "I was a disaster on the Hammer 'glamour queen front' because I didn't bare all."



Left: Whipped into shape on REVENGE OF THE PINK PANTHER's fangs the Lotus Eater. Top: Leon adhered to her motto, "Everything but the nipple."



fond memories of that CARRY ON."

Training as Tanya the Lotus Eater, an Amazonian dominatrix in REVENGE OF THE PINK PANTHER (1978), Leon "literally cracked the whip in my garden. Neighbors peered over the fence wondering what I was up to. I'm still not sure

they believed I was simply rehearsing for a part!" The previous year, Leon performed a less intimidating role as a "Bond girl": "[Producer] Cubby Broccoli asked me to go to Pinewood Studios to audition for THE SPY WHO LOVED ME. I told him I didn't want to be killed off, so I ended up

playing a hotel receptionist who hands Roger Moore his key, takes a fancy to him, then goes to his room and finds Barbara Bach has beaten her to him. We went on location to Sardinia and had a fabulous time as you always do when you are part of the Bond family. We even had a private dinner

with the Aga Khan."

Leon enjoyed another rendezvous with 007 in the renegade NEVER SAY NEVER AGAIN (1983) though, this second time around, the superspy was embodied by Sean Connery. Fishing lessons and a 10 a.m. audition, were obligatory for the role of Sexpot. "I turned up wearing a maroon caftan with a sleeveless tuxedo coat. The producers were amazed by such an over-the-top outfit at that time in the morning, and I'm sure it got me the job. We shot in Nassau and my scenes had me meeting Sean Connery on the quayside, later feeling a tug in my fishing line and pulling Bond out of the ocean.

Her last role to date was a guest spot on the British TV show ROY'S RAIDERS, but Leon admits that she's ready for some second innings. "If Hammer were to remake JEWEL OF THE SEVEN STARS, as I believe they're considering, of course I'd love to appear in it. I want to work." Involved with public relations for Le Cafe Du Jardin restaurant in London's Covent Garden, Leon is flattered by the attention kindled through her Hammer affiliation: "It's amazing to me that I made enough of an impact to be remembered so many years later. When I look back over my career today, I realize I was never marketed correctly. Raquel Welch was, and I needed the sort of Svengali she had in [her then-husband] Patrick Curtis... someone who would have made me train my mezzo-soprano voice for the musical theatre. My husband was proud of me, but could never understand the all-important publicity side of the business, where one thing really did lead to another. I think I'd like to be a personality, a presenter. I live in hope of a resurgence in my career. Like Queen Tera, I will rise again!" □

Facing: The expanded V-necklines notwithstanding, Leon "lost work by not divulging completely. Meow with a well-fabricated image."



Barbara Leigh Vampirella

EMBODYING THE VOLUPTUOUS FEMME, LEIGH MATCHED HER COUNTERPART WITH A PROVOCATIVE LIFESTYLE.

By CATHERINE CARSON

Just one word: Vampirella.

She's every male's adolescent fantasy: A startling and provocative image, this woman creature with pale, glowing skin wearing red straps and black boots over a very physical yet voluptuous physique. Her long, black hair carelessly flowing in the breeze, and her eyes, large, beautiful and starry. A little closer and there, the shimmer of razor sharp fangs piercing down on her full, scarlet lips. This creature woman is Vampirella of Drakulon.

She lived a happy successful life in pulp fiction land until publisher James Warren devised a brilliant campaign. It was designed to move her image from the celebrated 2-D realm into our world: "Vampirella in the flesh," primed and primed for her very own movie. Warren made a proposal to Hammer Films (HORROR OF DRACULA, CURSE OF FRANKENSTEIN) who loved the idea and came aboard. Together they launched a world search, interviewing thousands of women from all corners of the earth. The quest ended, ironically, right here in America. She walked in. A young actress, Barbara Leigh, so absolutely perfect, like a dart hitting the bulls eye, they signed her right away. "That's her, we've found her at last," they said. For Leigh it was like a fairy tale, to play a character she'd had so much in common with, the exotic looks, the strength, the imagination. She could hardly believe they picked her and yet, she could not imagine anyone else being more ideal for the



A Hammer Film adaptation of Vampirella, with Leigh cast as the title role, was announced in 1976. The movie's cancellation devastated the actress.

role.

Leigh was indeed, the perfect fit, long, dark hair, exceptional face, almond-shaped eyes and a playful, sensual nature similar to that of the character. The strategy was to get Vampirella out there with a huge ad campaign announcing her arrival, appearances at conventions (attended by thousands of fans) and covers on Warren magazine touting, "The movie you've been waiting for! VAMPIRELLA—A Major Motion Picture. Now in Production from Hammer Films. Coming your way in 1976!" Then it happened...nothing happened.

No production, no film, the entire project died before it ever really got started. Vampirella disappeared before she had her crack at stardom. Leigh was devastated. Though she picked up the pieces and moved on, the disappointment lingered and she wondered what could have been. .

Twenty Years Later

The Chiller Expo. The Meadowlands. A very long trip. A quick check in to the hotel and exactly 90 minutes to check out the set up before the big day tomorrow. "Don't get overwhelmed," I tell myself. "This is the first day and I have plenty of time to take in all the sights." An admirer standing next to me declares, "That's Barbara Leigh." "Oh, is she here yet?" I ask, looking at some really nice black and white photos. Then, as if she were invisible, a voice: "I'm here, I'm right here!" It's Barbara Leigh standing right before me. I introduce myself and she greets me with a warm smile. We agree to meet tomorrow before the festivities for an interview.

April 22, 1995 and many, many days thereafter...

Yes, she is very much the striking beauty you saw as Vampirella. In fact, she is much better in person—with a warmth and sincerity that makes her glow. I truly sense that if you have a friend in Barbara Leigh it is a friendship you can count on and one for life. I wonder, as I always do in beginning an interview, "Is the person going to feel comfortable enough to share vital, pertinent information, or..." We begin and I am immediately relieved, this is not going to be just another interview. Af-



Though Leigh was extensively promoted as *Vamparella*, the film was short-lived. Under Don Obit orders, "Peter Cushing was to co-star as Ponderosa the assassin. Dracula would have appeared in opening scenes."



ter all, this is her turn to speak out and not the record straight O.K., Here goes.

She grew up in the south, Ringgold, Georgia to be exact—the kind of place full of small town sweetness and comfort. Leigh has no recollection of her father who died when she was very young. Her adolescent life, though happily happy, lacked a prominent male figure for guidance. She loved entertaining—dancing, singing, starring in school plays—and naturally, as she got older the decision to pursue a career in acting seemed inevitable. Leigh bid adieu to Ringgold for big time Hollywood, never forgetting her proper southern upbringing; that sweet natured politeness and charm that could melt any heart.

It was not long after her arrival in Tinseltown that Leigh landed a job. The film was *THE STUDENT NURSES*, shot in three weeks for \$150,000, with writer/director Stephanie Rothman and her husband Charles Schwartz co-writing and producing. Rothman was no stranger to low-budget film making. She had worked with Roger Corman for many years. This time it was her turn to sit in the director's chair. "Stephanie was a very interesting woman to work with," recalls Leigh. "She and her husband were a good team—they worked well together."

THE STUDENT NURSES marked a first in more ways than one for Leigh: "When I went in for *STUDENT NURSES*, my character had a nude scene on the beach, so I had to show [Rothman] my breasts. It was the first time I ever had been asked to do something like that. I was a little embarrassed but I did it because I figured it was woman to woman and that it would be alright. So, I remember very well being cast for this film." Leigh smiles with that same innocence she probably had back then in Rothman's office. "As it turns out, I'm actually very proud of that scene. It's very lovely, overlapping like ballet."

For a young woman who knew exactly what she wanted, Leigh didn't waste any time moving up to the big league. "I went under contract with 20th Century for a short time just prior to the abolishment of their contract players. They had a lot of young kids under contract, I was in my early 20s, maybe 21 or 22. So I got a part on the TV show *BRACKEN'S WORLD*. Right after that, they completely got rid of the entire program."

Pretty Maiden All in a Row (1977) Director Roger Vadim "moved" Leigh to his native France; but when she insisted on returning home, Vadim denied her the chance to star with Brigitte Bardot

Following the 30th Century stunt, Leigh scored a small role in the film, **CHRISTIAN LICORICE STORE**. The year was 1971 and Leigh's co-stars were Maude Adams (pre-007 fame) and Beau Bridges, the latter cast as a tennis player searching for the meaning of life. Leigh barely recalls the film. "To tell you the truth because I had such a small part, I don't remember it that well. I don't think the film was very successful."

CHRISTIAN LICORICE STORE wasn't a boxoffice hit, although it offered experience, something a young starlet very much needed to get ahead. Leigh's charm and exotic beauty put her in the right place, the right time and attracted the right people wherever she went. One such instance, for example, happened purely out of coincidence. "I was walking on the beach of a Malibu colony. Somehow, Roger Vadim happened to spot me from a house he was renting there. He came out and introduced himself." Needless to say, Vadim was impressed, Leigh was promptly signed on for his next feature film.

The French director cast her in **PRETTY MAIDS ALL IN A ROW**, a film carrying some heavyweight actors: Rock Hudson as a high school guidance counselor coach, supported by Telly Savalas, Roddy McDowall and Angie Dickinson. The plot: Hudson's promiscuous behavior prompts one student to blow the whistle. She is silenced before exposing the coach's infidelities to his wife (Leigh). A couple of murders later, the film escalates into camp chaos.

Leigh now had an impressive credit to her name, a major role with some of Hollywood's biggest stars. "I remember Angie Dickinson, she was very nice. It's interesting I got to do a film with her because through the years, people had told me that I looked like a brunet Angie Dickinson. It never offended me because I think she's a beautiful woman and I admire her work. And of course, Rock Hudson was an incredible man, I really enjoyed working with him. It is sad the way his life ended. I hope that people remember him as being a wonderful guy."

While Leigh had amicable relations with co-stars on **PRETTY MAIDS**, it was the director with whom a stronger

BARBARA LEIGH

"[I] put so much energy into Vampirella. When the option was dropped, I was heartbroken. I'd believed I was her! The stress showed, so I decided to forget about her."



Leigh as Rock's Hudson's wife in **PRETTY MAIDS**; off-screen, they developed a friendship. "We homosocially was a no secret in the industry"

union formed. Vadim was very much into coveting his leading ladies. Romantic relationships carried over into real life. Leigh accepted his invitation to go to France and co-star with Brigitte Bardot. "After wrapping up (**PRETTY MAIDS**), he moved me to Paris for six months. It was a lot of fun hanging out with him and his jet set friends. He was much more wild in Paris than he was in America. In Paris, people knew him, they asked for his autograph. He discovered Brigitte Bardot, and he was very famous at that time. In America, people didn't know his face and didn't recognize him. So it wasn't as much fun for him."

The European lifestyle was a bit too much, too soon for Leigh. "He told me, 'If you go back home, forget it, you'll lose the chance to play this part.' But by then I was homesick for America and I wanted to go home. I didn't believe him. I went back and, of course, they cast someone else."

(Incidentally, the

film was Vadim's last with Bardot, **SI DON JUAN ETAIT UNE FEMME / IF DON JUAN WERE A WOMAN**. It was released in 1973 in France and later in Britain. Nade on-screen for the first time in 15 films, and fulfilling one of Vadim's old dreams, Bardot did a bed scene with her co-star, Jane Birkin (Leigh's replacement). The film suffered heavy criticism for appearing too sketchy. The bed-sharing was not in the least erotic. Other than it reuniting Bardot and Vadim, two people responsible for unleashing exploitation in cinema, **DON JUAN** was not the success they had hoped for.)

Leigh chose America over the foreign film. *C'est la vie!* So, it was good-bye to Roger Vadim, though, she says they remain friends to this day. There was actually someone back home who meant more to her than a part opposite Bardot. "I had a major boyfriend, Jim Aubrey, who was the president of MGM studios at that time." They met when he produced **PRETTY MAIDS**. "I didn't have a father growing up. He died when I was little, so I never had a father figure—someone to look up to." Twenty-four-year-old Leigh found that missing person in 54-year-old Aubrey. "He was the Dad that I had always wanted." Aubrey certainly had power in the business and could have opened any door for Leigh, although, she says, "It was his policy to never help me in any way with my career. When I got a

part, I got it on my own."

Prior to his reign over MGM, Aubrey headed the CBS television network. His style and uncanny intuition, "instant pop," gave the public exactly what they wanted: **THE BEVERLY HILLSBILLIES**, **MURDER, GOMER PYLE, THE MUMSTERS**, **MY FAVORITE MARTIAN**, **ROUTE 66**. Described as cool, cruelly efficient, arrogant, and ruthless, Aubrey, "the Smiling Cobra," had a way of making one-

Leigh poses in her Hollywood's flower garden (June, 1965). She's currently teasing with her Vampirella sequel.



mies and alienating the press by a no-interview policy. His top dog status declined in 1966, three series failed and the Nielsen ratings dropped, prompting his dismissal.

Then, in 1969, Kirk Kerkorian, real estate tycoon and close friend of Aubrey, purchased working control of the ailing MGM studios. Kerkorian brought Aubrey in as president for \$208,000 per year and purchase option of 17,500 shares. Aubrey accepting the position without a contract, capped productions to two million dollars, cutting personnel in half, auctioning off the Culver City lot, properties in London and other accumulating props. MGM with fewer, more adaptable sets and on-location shooting profited within the first year. Directors and producers infuriated over his policy of personally cutting footage for a PG rating experienced the tyrant CBS had witnessed years before.

"Tall, lean, light blue eyes, handsome," and Leigh by his side, Aubrey had his finger on the pulse of a changing world. A renegade and dictator whose life Jacqueline Susann (*The Love Machine*) and Jackie Collins (*The Stud*) adapted into novels that were both made into movies.

For a large part of Leigh's life she considered Aubrey her one true love, the powerful and handsome paternal figure she had always yearned for, although today, she feels the relationship was a crutch. "I found myself always going back to him, feeling that I really truly loved and needed him." Disappointment is evident in Leigh's

BARBARA LEIGH

"Steve [McQueen], who was more down to earth, referred to Elvis as 'that guitar guy,' putting him down as a guitar-strumming hick. Elvis called Steve 'that motorcycle hick.'"



JUNIOR BONNER (1972): The romantic liaison between Steve McQueen and co-star Leigh was hardly discreet. "We were all over the TV and papers."

voice as she tries to explain the connection she shared with Aubrey. "He always treated me like a queen but his daughter was another story." The love and admiration turned to disdain; Leigh came to know a side of him she could not accept. Aubrey's daughter, Schuyler, and Leigh formed a very close friendship. "She wasn't beautiful enough for him or this or that enough for him. He used to beard her out when she was nine years old and he was a big shot living in New York. He would take her out with all these young beautiful girls, treating her horribly. As I got to know and love her through the years, I just couldn't take him anymore. She is today one of my

closest friends."

Leigh did profit from Aubrey's position in one way. It facilitated her mingling among the elite circles of Hollywood. Aubrey was the head of MGM when the documentary film, *ELVIS: THAT'S THE WAY IT IS*, was released in 1970. Leigh had always been a big Elvis Presley fan. "I was in the third grade when I first saw Elvis, and I had always loved him," so naturally, when Aubrey took her to see his Las Vegas show, they went back stage. It was Presley's road manager, Joe Raposo, who first discovered Leigh. "I'd spotted Barbara in the audience the moment she walked in with Aubrey. She had a knockout body, an exquisite face, and her long, straight, dark hair was parted in the middle, accentuating her American Indian heritage, a big thing in those days. Barbara was special, and I knew Elvis would love her. After the show, I rushed to the dressing

room. 'E,' I said, 'want till you see this girl with Jim Aubrey. She's beautiful!' He changed his clothes in record time and came out to see for himself." Leigh was sitting at a table with singer Rick Nelson and his wife, Carole, while Aubrey sat at the bar. Presley and Aubrey were competitors for women, Presley "fancied himself the mongoose who could take that Smiling Cobra down." Leigh, the ultimate attraction, passed her phone number under the table after Presley's request. She remembers being awestruck; "This was someone I had always adored—it was The King, for God's sake. I just couldn't believe that I was actually meeting him."

Aubrey and Leigh returned to Los Angeles after the show. Her phone rang. It was Presley and he wanted her to come back. "Jan and I were supposed to go away for Memorial Day weekend. I had a few days before that so Elvis talked me into it." When Leigh was picked up at the airport by one of Presley's assistants, she was informed: "You can't come to the show, Jim [Aubrey] is here with Jo Anne Worley." To Leigh's painful surprise, Aubrey was playing the same game.

In his book, *Good Rockers Tonight*, Raposo recounts the situation, "Barbara was emotionally torn, excited over Elvis but hurt by Jim Aubrey's infidelity. Elvis attracted her, but she

TERMINAL ISLAND (1973): reunited Leigh with her *STUDENT NURSES* director, Barbara Robinson. The cast included not-ready-for-prime-time players Tom Selleck (*MAGNUM, P.I.*) and Phyllis Davis (*WHEELS*)



was really in love with Jim. Elvis was so proud of stealing Aubrey's girl that he bought a stuffed mongoose and coins to commemorate the event." Meanwhile, Leigh remembers "I flew in with one outfit, thinking I would only be coming in for the night. He [Presley] decided I should stay for the rest of the week and the weekend. I had no more clothes so he bought me evening gowns for every day I stayed."

Initially, the quest was to undermine Aubrey, but The King's malicious motives turned to love. "Barbara was one of only a few women that really meant something to him," claims Esposito. Presley's staff pinned a term, "Lufer," to Leigh because she was one of the few who remained a close friend until the day he died.

Esposito attributed their closeness to similar backgrounds—both were children of the South. "Elvis loved long talks on spiritual and occult matters with beautiful, sympathetic women, and Barbara knew the Bible as well as he did. They stayed in his bedroom for hours at a time, talking about subjects Elvis rarely broached with the guys." Their relationship was like a whirlwind. "In the 18 months of dating Elvis, I toured with him and was one of the few girls who got into Graceland. He was a country boy just like I'm a country girl, very polite, a great sense of humor and always joking around. I called Elvis a hick but then I'm a hick, too, so I say it in an affectionate way." Leigh recalls Presley's genuine love of life although living normally was not an easy thing to do. "We went motorcycle riding one day and there were like five or six cars behind us, he couldn't go anywhere alone. People always followed him."

In 1972, Leigh tested for the female lead in Sam Peckinpah's western, JUNIOR BONNER. Her audition didn't exactly affect the director, Leigh lost to the actress Tiffany Bolling. The star of the film was impressed: "Steve [McQueen] came running out after me and said, 'I liked your test. I'd really like to take you out for dinner.' So, I accepted and we started dating."

"Steve referred to Elvis as 'that guitar guy,' putting him down as a hick who strummed a guitar," Barbara said. "Elvis called Steve 'that motorcycle hick.' Steve was more down to earth. He was a person that 'burped and ate with his feet on the table—very natural." For a short time there was competition between all three guys, Presley, McQueen and Aubrey.

"This picture, shot for Playboy, but never printed, is a favorite of mine." Leigh was accustomed to cameras. "On the HARRY-O TV series, I was the girl next door in the tub who kept popping in."



The door was not completely shut on JUNIOR BONNER; McQueen called Leigh saying, "Have I got a big surprise for you..." The part was here if she still wanted it. Tiffany Bolling had suddenly been stricken with an illness. Leigh was flown to the Arizona set the very next day.

JUNIOR BONNER was a departure for McQueen and "The Master of Violence," director Peckinpaw. Critics were surprised at the "mild, or gentler film and 'a nice, loose, easygoing rodeo picture.' It's one of McQueen's favorites. An aging rodeo champ wants to win one last time in his hometown show. Leigh found pleasure in working with very talented, seasoned actors as well as the infamous director. "Sam was totally outrageous. There was one bar scene where everybody is drunk and fighting. He actually lined the bar up with drinks and he got us all really drunk. We had so much fun that day."

During JUNIOR BONNER, McQueen and Leigh lived together. His wife had recently filed for divorce and McQueen requested that no media be allowed near the set. "At that time, he was hot property in Hollywood, a very big star." Banning the paparazzi, of course, only provoked more sensationalism. Barbara remembers, "We were all over the TV and papers, our secret was out."

After seven long weeks, BONNER wrapped and everyone headed home.

Leigh remembers McQueen wanting them to stay together. "Steve wanted to live with me, but I still thought that I was deeply in love with Jim Aubrey. Jim and I had split up, but I was still so madly in love with him." In hindsight, Leigh feels that she was wasting her time on Aubrey, although she didn't realize it then. Everything had become entirely too complicated. Leigh felt she needed that sense of security that only came from being

BARBARA LEIGH

"Sam Peckinpaw was totally outrageous. There was one bar scene in JUNIOR BONNER where everyone is drunk and fighting. Sam lined the bar with drinks and got us all really drunk."



PRETTY MAIDS ALL IN A ROW: Roger Vadim directs the chess game between Leigh and Peckinpaw. "I was totally in love with Vadim. We remain friends."

with Aubrey. "It was like Steve was the down-to-earth, country boy I knew and understood and Jim was this polished, worldly type that fascinated me." At that time, she decided to return to Aubrey. "Steve and I just became very good friends." Although she ended the romance with McQueen her feelings remain fond. "Steve was a wonderful person. I miss him so much."

Leigh's new venture was a plum part in a film based on Gail Parent's novel, *Sheila Levine is Dead and Living in New York*. "I was contracted to do the film, based on the very popular book. Paramount interviewed and tested a slew of girls and ended up giving me the part. I signed the contract and started preparing for the role when suddenly I got news that the lead actress, Jeanne Berlin, didn't want me to play as her co-star. The talk was she thought I would upstage her and steal the show. They ended up giving the part to her friend, Rebecca Dianna Smith, who was not right for the

role. It broke my heart. They bought me off is what they did. I was paid the salary agreed to in my contract and that was it. Money is nothing when you put your heart and soul into something and I wanted to do that part."

It seems SHEILA LEVINE IS DEAD AND LIVING IN NEW YORK was not the only near miss in Leigh's career. Another was a prospective television series set in Japan which would have co-starred Jacklyn Smith. Leigh also auditioned for CHARLIE'S ANGELS. "They ended up casting someone else, so there were some really close calls that I had in my life."

One television show that did cast her, was a detective drama on ABC with David Janssen as TV's most bohemian private eye. The show was HARRY-O and featured a beach front cottage near San Diego and a P.I. who took cases that especially interested him, most often ones involving

lunatic girls, although they didn't seem to matter very much to him. Leigh's part was sort of comic relief. "I was the girl next door in the bikini who kept popping in all the time."

Allegations were made hating that Janssen and Leigh were more than just friends off the set. Leigh disclaims the rumor. "There was talk of a romance but we never did, our relationship was strictly professional. We were close, very good friends, that's all."

Leigh's next part was the character, Bunny Campbell, a catatonic who sinks her parents to death with an ice pick ("Now that was a lot of fun") and is sent away to serve time in a penal colony. TERMINAL ISLAND was Leigh's second time working with director, Stephanie Rothman.

"That was a funny film. I say one line to the Doctor at the very end after they've whipped and tied me to the beach, 'Take me home.' So in the end, I talk, which was the greatest part of the film for me."

In 1975, Leigh was cast as the female lead opposite black actor, Fred Williamson in BOSS NIGGER. Due to the racist connotation in the title, it is now listed under just BOSS. "I never liked the title myself, I thought it sounded horrible. I always used to refer to it as Bossman." Conceding exploitation, the picture was written by Williams, who was a purveyor of shoot

Leigh posed as Vampirella for 7 magazine covers. "I love this cover, shot by Israeli photographer Mark Londoner in N.Y."



'em up. Leigh played the school teacher and Williamson was the hunky hunter who out-hustles all the white men.

MISTRESS OF THE APES, shot in 1975, gave Leigh top billing. The film was directed by Larry Buchanan and co-starred Jenny Neumann. "MISTRESS OF THE APES was great fun to shoot. However, it had a bad ending for me." It seems the post-production crew had troubles with scheduling and kept changing the date for Leigh's looping. "I had just recently been married to Joe Lewis (karate champion and actor)." He was shooting the action film, **JAGUAR LIVES!** with Barbara Bach and Christopher Lee in Spain. "I kept begging them to give me a solid date so that I could buy a ticket to go visit my husband, whom I hadn't seen in three months. They kept changing days and stalling for more time. When they finally gave a date, I had already bought my tickets. They were non-refundable and I left for Europe, so I was dubbed. After the fact, I think I made the wrong choice in not staying for looping but, that was the choice I made." Leigh would have preferred them using her own words but she felt she had waited long enough and they lost out by not responding.

"They were very angry with me and never really forgave me. I was in the south of France during the Cannes Film Festival, and surprisingly, the film was entered! I saw the producer there, I waved and said, 'Hello.' He looked up, saw me and just kind of kept going." Leigh finds solace in knowing that the film didn't do that well even though it did get released internationally.


Not conscious of it at the time, the film, **SEVEN** would be Leigh's last. Andy Sidaris directed and William Smith co-starred in the action thriller shot in Hawaii. A U.S. intelligence group hires Smith and his team of specialists to destroy the Hawaiian crime syndicate. There were many tongue-in-cheek scenes, one in particular is later immortalized in **RAIDERS OF THE LOST ARK**—the shooting of the over-sealous swordsman. Leigh remembers being nearly raped in one sequence, but instead, shot off a certain part of the assailant's anatomy. "Andy Sidaris and his wife are good friends of mine. I enjoyed working with them very much and I think this movie was the most fun."

Now, is the part most frustrating for

continued on page 42



"Twenty years ago, just the Vampirella costume cost \$7,000 and the boots were another \$4,000. Even though I was inexperienced about not doing the film, I'll be forever immortalized as Vampirella."



SHAUNA O'BRIEN

UNTAMED, UNINHIBITED AND
STREAKING TO EROTIC
THRILLER CELEBRITY.

BY DAN SCAFFEROTTI

The public was originally introduced to Shauna O'Brien on TV's grisliest scandal sheet, *HARD COPY*. Profiled as actor Charles Sheen's asexual, O'Brien notes, "I went out with Charlie for five months, and they played all this stuff about how he faked me down!" Her interview didn't shade Ginger Lynn Allen, a former X-star who's crossed over into B-films. Allen, taped for a separate segment, carefully aimed a barrage of petihots at O'Brien. Well, it just happened that *HARD COPY* later trained its cameras on a Hollywood prom party and Ms. O'Brien, one of the guests, fired off some comebacks of her own.

"I brushed Ginger Lynn Allen because she had brushed me on radio and TV talk shows," hisses O'Brien. "She had gone out with Charlie a long time ago, and she's just jealous so she had to bash me. She doesn't know me, has never even met me. I got on and, in a very mature, sophisticated way, brushed her and it came off making her look like a fucking idiot...which she basically is, an idiot."

A self-admitted ex-husband was going online, Shauna O'Brien, 40, was the first to tell me about her



O'Brien is screaming into the limelight. It's likely you've already seen this, but you'll be sampling a lot more of O'Brien, now that she's cast in "Leading Lady" roles. But gagging her as this month's centerpiece is something of an injustice. After all, O'Brien is a sex symbol with an attitude, not an ingenuely screaming or agonized-squealing victim. Unfortunately, this movie chapter can't be verbally communicated through a catty picture.

Raised with seven brothers on a farm in Washington state, O'Brien's spent her adolescence in the fast lane. Literally. Accelerating her snowmobile to 190 mph, she habitually cruised the frosty terrain of her home state. "You don't know what it's like to be behind the wheel of a snowmobile at that speed," grins O'Brien. "I was declared the fastest female racer for four years in a row, and won a bunch of trophies. I started racing because we had to snowmobile to cabins that my family had bought in Oregon. I was really, really good at it because I've always been a tomboy and I've always loved speed."

"I don't know how actors stop themselves from getting aroused. With a naked girl on top of their guys do get aroused. I've done artistic nude photo shoots with guys, just phenomenal dudes, and those guys were hard the whole time!"



Turning 18, O'Brien attended a wedding in Los Angeles. Luxuriating in the less frigid temperature, she traded in her snowmobile for suntan lotion. "I had a hundred bucks in my pocket when I arrived," recalls O'Brien. "I started doing little bit parts, like a walk-on as a model or a beauty pageant contestant. Extra work makes me sick, I'd never do it now. They're so mean to extras on sets. But let me tell you something, I didn't have to be a hooker someplace, like meet girls do when they come to town. I didn't have to suck up to rich men. I paid my rent and I paid my bills."

Within a year, O'Brien launched a modeling career with some low-rent assignments for newspapers and band magazines. O'Brien's neighbor, adult film actress Britt Morgan, persuaded the bit player to share her

"Movies that require sexy fantasy scenes are a piece of cake for me, because that's what I do. Penthouse videos are stuff like that."



"I didn't have to be a hooker, like most girls do when they come to town. I didn't have to suck up to rich men. I paid my bills and rent."

spotlight on an "exotic dancing" tour. To insure O'Brien's credibility as a celebrity, Morgan promoted her co-worker as a *Playboy* centerfold. "I went out on a four week tour as a totally naïve exotic dancer," O'Brien candidly relates. "I worked in Memphis, Tennessee and Acapulco, and made a shitload of money, too. I've always been flirtatious and the exhibitionist. I went into a topless contest and the response I got from the audience was overwhelming. I really cleaned house. Actually, you kind of have all the guys by the balls in those strip places, because they're all sucking up to you. Besides, I'll be able to use that experience if I play a role like *SHOWGIRLS*. Everything that I've done so far, even if it was a little naughty, is going to be to my advantage someday."

Upon their return to L.A., Morgan recommended her friend for a swimwear spread. But, upon her arrival in glamour photographer Suz Randall's office, O'Brien was encouraged to scout the swimsuit for her birthday suit. "Suz said I'd be great for a centerfold and I did a test," says O'Brien. "She took a roll of pictures in lingerie and, within two days, they approved me. Four weeks later, I was in Mexico to do the [January, '92] *Penthouse* centerfold shoot. Just the week before me, they shot Julie Strain in the same location for her second *Penthouse* feature. Anyway, I got to travel a lot. I had left all my possessions in storage and, after return-



ing from a trip to Germany, I moved in with my friend, Julie Strain."

But O'Brien realized her centerfold exposure could jeopardize more mainstream modeling assignments. "I had long hair down to my waist, and used a different name—Stevie Jean—when working with *Penthouse*," she reveals. "It's my brother's name and my middle name. And, not too long after *Penthouse*, I cut my hair really short for a Nexus ad in *People* magazine which totally separated me from *Penthouse*. I played the 'Stevie Jean' character whenever I worked for *Penthouse*, but could turn around and still do television commercials as Shauna. Stevie is a whole lot different from Shauna in a photo shoot... but Shauna can be sexy, too."

Inundated with photo assignments, O'Brien posed for print ads (*Fredericks of Hollywood*, *LaCosta Spa*, the *May Company*) and magazines (*Muscle and Fitness*, *Hot Rod*, *New Look*, etc.), in addition to a *Vanity Fair* shoot with Julie Strain). Her work was supplemented with shoots for calendars, book covers, trading cards and a pin-up poster waterproofed for shower stalls.

Crossing into the video arena, O'Brien appeared in *Penthouse* productions and *HOW TO STRIP FOR YOUR LOVER*, the latter limited to a British release. Her torrid presence proved a scene-stealer in music videos for Motley Crue (*Primal Scream*), Paula Shore (*Thank God I'm a Country Boy*) and Poison (*Fire and Ice*). O'Brien turned into a TV tabloid fixture, surfacing on *A CURRENT AFFAIR*, *EXTRA* and the aforementioned *HARD COPY*, but eventually earned visibility on Vicki Lawrence's gabfest and *THE TONIGHT SHOW*.

Her "acting" roles were reduced to hits on *MURDER*



"Everything I've done so far, even if it was a little naughty, is going to be to my advantage one day...like if I play a role like SHOWGIRLS."

SHE WROTE, and DOOGIE HOWSER, M.D., trivia aficionadoes may recall O'Brien portrayed a Pereng's humanoid girlfriend on a *STAR TREK: DEEP SPACE NINE* episode. Cast in feature-length films, she played little more than window dressing in *FLATLINERS* and *ANOTHER 48 HOURS* but was afforded more screen time in *PAMELA PRINCIPLE II*. "It wasn't a speaking part," she recounts, "but it was a very important role in the movie. I want a sexy set of pictures of me, so I consulted hoodlout photographer. I'm really nervous at first and he calms me down. By the end of the scene, I'm modeling and being really sexy."

She admits her subsequent film, *MALIBU BIKINI WEEKEND*, "really didn't have any storyline. It was just one of those T&A things. I had a lead in it and I wanted to get a feel for what acting was, because I had no patience—whatsoever—for acting lessons."

"I don't want to put any pressure on myself with acting, because it just stresses me out too much. Since my acting skills aren't 100% just now, I don't want to push too hard. I'm scared right now."

Director Edward Holzman, who helmed O'Brien in some videos, invited the aspiring actress to audition for his erotic drama *FRIEND OF THE FAMILY* (1995). "I initially read for the part of Laura," explains O'Brien. "The girl who was originally cast as Elke, the leading role, had cancelled

"Most *Penthouse* Pals go downhill, but I went up. After *Penthouse*, you're confident with your body because you're completely nude."

I read for the part and was booked about an hour later.

"It was movie bootcamp for me. It was my first real movie, and I had to concentrate on my acting. I pulled it off. Those fantasy scenes were a piece of cake for me, because I've already done *Penthouse* videos."

The plot: En route to her home from a Las Vegas engagement, Elke pays a visit to her sister's childhood girlfriend (Griffin Drew). She lands right into the eroding heart of a dysfunctional family. For openers, there's the lawyer (C.T. Miller) who's so preoccupied with clients that his wife feels abandoned. Miller thinks his son had enrolled in law school, but junior is actually earning an education as a filmmaker. Then there's teenage daughter Montana (Lisa Boyle), the town tramp who can't stomach her stepmother. Elke's mission, reunite the kinfolk.

O'Brien was required to appear in two love scenes, one with Miller and another with beautiful B-starlet Drew (*DINOSAUR ISLAND*, *DINOSAUR VALLEY GIRLS*). "The scene with Miller was a very beautiful, well done sex scene," she affirms. "I really don't like sex scenes in movie because they're very awkward. While the scene with Griffin Drew is a lesbian scene, it's not like we're two lesbians having sex. Her character leaned on me so much by then, and I made her feel so beautiful, that it naturally happens. I'm kind of like the sexual surrogate for the family, I make them feel their oats, again. The wife feels unattractive and neglected but, after having sex with me, she feels beautiful and gets back together with her husband."

"I was more uncomfortable with the guy-girl scene than with the girl-girl scene. By that time in the movie, Griffin and I had become good friends and we'd talk about how funny it was that we had a love scene together. We knew it was going to be very pretty and not overdone,



"I've always been flirtatious and the exhibitionist. I went into a topless contest and really cleaned house."

just some kissing and hugging. Every time they'd say, 'Cut!', we'd just start cracking up laughing because neither of us are lesbians."

She speculates on the less amusing side effects that actors are prone to endure while simulating passion. "I don't know how the guys stop themselves from getting aroused. Here they've got this naked girl

sitting on top of them. I've heard that a lot of guys do get aroused. I've done artistic nude photo shoots with guys, which were just phenomenal, and these guys were hard the whole time."

There was only one "behind-the-scenes" dispute, though it was a lulu. O'Brien "flipped" when—untrained and on short notice—she was supposed to

demonstrate a martial art. "I have a dance scene outside by the pool," she relates through gritted teeth. "I was actually supposed to be doing Tai Chi, but I freaked out. I said, 'Listen, if you wanted me to do some frigg'n' Tai Chi thing, you should have let me study for a week.' It's not the easiest thing in the world to learn."

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Stella Stevens

Sex Symbol Sovereign

THE BOMBSHELL RECALLS HER CAREER: FROM NUTTY PROFESSOR TO POSEIDON ADVENTURE TO THE PRESENT.

BY LINNEA QUIGLEY

Arriving a few minutes early at her *FF* photo shoot, I invest the spare time in a silent prayer before she makes her entrance: "Please God, help me feed Stella Stevens all the right questions." I mean, wouldn't you be just a little unnerved? Alternately a contract player for 20th Century-Fox, Paramount and Columbia, Stevens landed plum roles that prompted collaborations with big actors (reminds me, ask about Shelley Winters) and legendary directors. Cast as femme fatale *Appassionata* von Cl-



max in 1959's *LIT. ABNER*, she surfaced in classic films ranging from Jerry Lewis' schizophrene comedy, *THE NUTTY PROFESSOR*, to the underrated *THE BALLAD OF CABLE HOGUE*. Sam Peckinpah's pretext to rhapsodize about the old West sans his usual cathartic anarchy.

OK, a career recap: Born in Mississippi as Estelle Egglestone, she was fresh out of Memphis State University when cast as Cherie in a stage performance of *BUS STOP* (Marilyn Monroe finally earned some respect when she played the same role in the 1956 film adaptation). A rave review prompted an impulsive trip to New York—

Stella Stevens glides into the studio. I take a few deep breaths. She not only remains professionally active but very beautiful. Years truly and Debra Lamb, an actress serving as the session's make-up artist, come bearing gifts for the white goddess. Shaking myself out of the heroine-worship mode, I toss my notes and ask Stevens to pick-up the story after her exodus from Memphis.

Turns out she traversed to New York for a meeting with a 20th Century-Fox hot shot who sent her parking

Above: In *THE GUNSCORP* (1960), I thought of myself as a female Jerry Lewis to Dean Martin's straight man (left). Facing: As the co-hooker in *THE POSEIDON ADVENTURE*.





for Hollywood. One speculative project was the title role in a Jean Harlow biography, but Stevens was cast in *SAY ONE FOR ME*, a 1959 Bing Crosby musical. Big problem: Stevens' contract was dropped because she neglected to qualify for a work card.

A photo lay-out for *Adam* magazine beckoned Stevens back to the studio lot. Upon her arrival, she spotted the assistant director of her debut film, who introduced Stevens to director Edward Dmytryk. Contemplating a remake of Marlene Dietrich's *BLUE ANGEL*, Dmytryk called Stevens' agent and offered to more than match her contract fee with an additional \$100. In the meantime, 20th Century-Fox's head honcho invited Stevens to his office; impressed with her *SAY ONE FOR ME* datties, he raved about Stevens' acting and asked if she had ever been under contract. "Yes," she replied. "Six weeks ago, I was under contract to 20th Century. But they fired me."

During the negotiating and re-negotiating, Stevens signed-up at Paramount for *L/I, ABNER*, reprising the hip-swinging role that Tina Louise performed on Broadway; however, the triumph was precluded by a conflict with *Playboy*. Stevens, who had posed for the magazine, tried to dissuade the management from exploiting her fame by unifying her pictures into a (January, 1960) *Playmate* pictorial. The actress would fight a 15-year legal battle as a result of the magazine's insistence on resisting a court order and continuously running photos without consent. *Playboy* would later include shots of Stevens in a trading card set, inaccurately identifying her birthdate and birthplace.

Stevens was not only supporting a career but a son. She was only 16 when Andrew was born, and mother-

shared one critic, "Stevens is a beautiful, talented performer who perhaps because she was a former *Playboy* centerfold—was ignored as sexpots."



Top: Stevens' famous (and "sweetly over the top") Betsy Stevens, "In her best comedy role," is teased by Jerry Lewis' *NUTTY PROFESSOR* (1958).

hood precipitated her resignation from the 10th grade. Divorced when her son was only a year and a half old, Steven has drawn into a custody battle waged in Tennessee. Someone thought it would be funny to slip Steven's *Playboy* lay-out under a sheet of glass on the judge's desk. It was 1960 and the conservative South didn't have a sense of humor. Stevens' *Playboy* spread was gauged as nothing less than criminal. A preacher, affiliated with Memphis' First Baptist Church, devoted a sermon to the condemnation of Stevens, suggesting that she was somehow a catalyst for all young girls corrupted by Hollywood. Stevens' nude lay-out wedged a separation between herself and her "shamed" father, who—20 years after the issue hit newsstands—still refused to reconcile or even speak to his daughter. Reclining on his

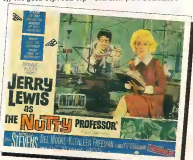
deathbed, Mr. Eggleston was denied the opportunity to verbally communicate with his offspring, a stroke had perpetuated his silence.

I relate to Stevens that one of the most conspicuous on-screen traits, linked to some of her characters, is innocence. She thinks my observation is pretty interesting. Flashing back to the 1958 meeting in New York, she recalls the guy who encouraged her to travel West. His name was Sam Shaw, whose photographic rendering of Marilyn Monroe—her skirt, propelled by a gust of air, billowing-up in *THE SEVEN YEAR ITCH*—has been indelibly linked as the sex goddess' historic won. Advising Stevens to preserve her innocence, Shaw introduced the actress to noted filmmaker John Cassavetes. Stevens was subsequently cast in Cassavetes' *TOO LATE BLUES* (1962), an exercise in film noir. *Baseline's Encyclopedia of Film* acknowledges that the

movie—one of Stevens' favorites—showcased her dramatic gifts." Though *TOO LATE BLUES* offered singer Bobby Darin his first dramatic role, Stevens—clad in bathrobe—was plastered across promotional ads with copy trumpeting, "Stella shoots up to stardom."

"Stella, how do you pull off the good cop/bad cop

routine?" I ask. "I mean, how do you wrap even your most covertly dark roles in a facade of innocence?" Stevens replies that she translates evil not as a premeditated black widow-like compulsion, but as a hellish mix that her characters sweetly and childishly savor. Reminds me of my character from *SORORITY*





BABES IN THE SLIME-BALL HOWL-A-RAMA, which comparatively—on second thought, *nooak*.

1962. Stevens supported Elvis Presley in **GIRLS! GIRLS! GIRLS!** But, pressed to offer her recollections of E, she clams up. After a pause, Stevens cautiously says, "I'm trying to put down the story on paper, trying to recreate the story of what happened when Stella met Elvis...and see if I can tell it nicely." But I probe. Another actress, profiled in this issue, recalls her love life with Presley by delivering a venerative, sentimental sonnet. Stevens, obviously, has no inclination to canonize the King. So I grill her: *C'mon Stella, I don't want to wait for the friggen' book. Just what did happen?* "The movie, itself, is something I've never seen and I never will see," she sniffs. "I felt I was so mistreated by the producer and the director that I would never see the film, and I never have." Another pause. "I wish I had never met Elvis Presley and worked with him because I could have been a better fan. Sometimes you meet people you think could be your idol and then, after you meet them, you're so disappointed that you don't even like them anymore. It takes something out of your life. Everyone else has fun liking him and you can't anymore."

I move on to 1963's **THE NUTTY PROFESSOR**, and my inquiries are greeted with a significantly warmer reception. In the event that you're unfamiliar with the plot (which will soon be recycled in a remake starring Eddie Murphy): After drinking a chemical potion, Jerry Lewis—as the nerdy, buck-toothed title character—transforms into a greasy, egocentric ladykiller. One suspects that Lewis may have cloned former adskick, Dean Martin, as the professor's narcissistic alter ego,

Notes writer L. J. Green Quigley, "Stevens was never just a sex symbol. That's why she'll be around long after the BA'YWATCH babes hit the tracks."

“Working with Peckinpah was like working with a wounded rattler. He was his own worst enemy. What a wonderful talent, yet what a strange, weird brain he had.”

Buddy Love. I mean, the comedian's homely Jekyll is good ol' Jerry, adhering to the same "monkey boy" schtick that he used to perform, as a gangly dweeb, opposite Dino. But Mr. Hyde (i.e. Buddy Love), also played by Lewis, may have been rendered as a grim caricature of hunky, handsome, ultracool crooner Martin (Lewis' smug playboy even tries to sing a piano ballad). So I pass the question to Stevens, "Do you think the acerbic relationship between Lewis and Martin may have influenced Lewis to 'recreate' Martin as Buddy Love?" She promptly punctures my psychobabble with a flat "NO! I have to say that Jerry tried his best to create a unique, different kind of character and if it did look like this suave, wonderful and sexy Dean Martin character—who had been his partner for years—then it was because every woman's dream was a slick-haired, sexy guy who could sing and had some sort of romance. There was this attitude back in those days: 'If she's a lady, treat her like a whore...and if she's a whore, treat her like a lady'."

"What Jerry wanted to do was visualize someone who wants physical perfection on the outside, rotten on the inside. It was a wonderful character for him to do, and he did not want people to think he had done this with Dean Martin in mind. He did not want the character to be compared with his ex-partner."

Flash forwarding to 1966, I pass a couple of comedies and anchor on *THE RAGE*. One of three films that Stevens did with Glenn Ford, the premise involves a rabies-infected doctor who tracks across a Mexican desert to find someone who can administer an antidote. The film was critically drubbed, but Stevens cites her character—Pearla, the whore with a heart of gold—as one of her preferred performances. She also enjoyed the rapport with 33-year-old director Gilberto Gazcon who, four years earlier, earned the Mexican equivalent of an Academy Award.

During the same year, Dean Martin was cast as secret agent Matt Helm in *THE SILENCERS*, the first of a film quartet which transmuted Donald Hamil-



BALLAD OF CABLE HOGUE: Cast as a prostitute romanced by Jason Robards, Stevens recalls Sam Peckinpah as "among the greatest characters I've worked with."

ton's spy novels into burlesque routines. Stevens, as Martin's leading lady, garnered glowing reviews ("She's just wonderful as a well-meaning klutz," gushed Leonard Maltin). "I thought of myself as the female Jerry Lewis to Dean Martin's straight man," smiles Stevens. "Gail, the character I played in it, was a fiery-red-headed girl who wasn't dumb but accident-prone."

Stevens was reunited with Martin for her subsequent project, 1968's *HOW TO SAVE A MARRIAGE (AND RUIN YOUR LIFE)*. Another comedy, *WHERE ANGELS GO, TROUBLE FOLLOWS*—a sequel to 1966's *TROUBLE WITH ANGELS*—cast Stevens as a hip nun; during production, the actress declared cold turkey on a smoking habit that had plagued her since she was a 13-year-old teenager.

Debra returns from Jennifer's Coffee Shop with cappuccinos for everyone. Stevens takes sips while rolling her golden locks in curlers. We adjourn to the kitchen for brunch, but I can't eat—I'm still in awe of Stella Stevens.

I flash-forward past a potboiler called *SOL MADRID* and *THE MAD ROOM*, the latter a 1969 horror film that Stevens claims was severely cut to placate the squeamish (turns out the director was banned from the editing

room). Just couldn't wait to learn about Stevens' experiences with the late Sam Peckinpah, who directed the actress in the lauded but sadly neglected *BALLAD OF CABLE HOGUE* (1970). Heard plenty about Peckinpah's machismo—I mean, he orchestrated those lyrical bloodbaths in the likes of *THE WILD BUNCH*, *STRAW DOGS* and 1972's *THE GETAWAY*. But was Peckinpah sensitive to actresses? "Sam is probably one of the greatest characters whom I ever worked with," replies Stevens. "It was like working with a wounded rattlesnake. He was a very volatile personality. You never knew if he was going to love or hate you. He hid behind dark glasses or mirrored sunglasses and mumbled when he spoke on the set, so you'd have to go right up to his face to hear what he was directing you to do. He did everything he could to drive everybody crazy."

"I'm glad I witnessed it, I'm glad I did the movie, though I threatened to walk off the picture. He had fired 32 or 35 people off the crew and sent them home for various little political games. But then the union said, 'If you send one more person off this picture, we're shutting you down and you are not going to be able to make this film.' So he straightened up and used the crew he had. He made a lot of enemies. He was his own

1976: Stevens lies the least with the delightfully dead *ARNOLD* (Norman MacRae), as the corpse's brother, inquires about the honey moon.





BALLAD OF CABLE HOGUE: A sootied Stevens sings duetfully morning. "It's the great role that we Stevens actors have been waiting for," wrote Gene Peary.

worst enemy, he didn't need anyone else to be an enemy to him. What a wonderful talent and yet what a strange, weird brain this man had!"

Debra keeps goading me to "Eat, eat!" Stevens starts to tell us something about a psychic she met in London, but a shrill ringing intrudes upon her story. It's the phone and Stevens answers herself to take the call. Dares!

A maudlin manhunt thriller called **A TOWN CALLED HELL** sunk out of sight but, one year later, Stevens appeared in a box office bonanza. Prominent in an ensemble cast (Gene Hackman, Leslie Nielsen, Carol Lynley, et al), she was cast as a reformed hooker married to cop Ernest Borgnine in **THE POSEIDON ADVENTURE** (1972). The Irwin Allen production, about a cruise ship that's capsized by a tidal wave, was so commercially successful that it spawned a disaster subgenre of big budget (**THE TOWERING INFERNO**) and comparatively inexpensive (**TIDAL WAVE**, **ST. HELENS**) films. "I was very proud I was in that picture," says Stevens. "We were 14 weeks working on it. Everybody knew how good it was going to be." The film sparked a reunion with **MAD BOOM** co-star Shelley Winters, who's performance

as a Jewish grandmother earned her an Oscar nomination as Best Supporting Actress. "I remember while we were shooting **THE POSEIDON ADVENTURE**," grins Stevens, "I was carrying an empty fruit basket to my car. Shelley waddled by and said, 'Don't put all your eggs in that.'" Though she describes Winters as "a little hard to work with," Stevens savors her sense of humor.

Aspiring to tackle roles that elevate the status of women, Stevens burned her bra in "the first film about Women's Lib," **STAND UP AND BE COUNTED** (1972). But critics dished the movie; Leonard Maltin described it as "cardboard all the way; the only standout is Stella Stevens' comic perfor-

"I wish I'd never worked with Elvis. Sometimes you meet someone who could be your idol; but, after the meeting, you're so disappointed that you don't like them anymore."

mance." Stevens subsequently signed on for a string of B-movies, including an "old dark house" spoof called **ARNOLD**. Supported by a veteran cast (Elsa Lanchester, Roddy McDowall, et al), Stevens played a gold digger who marries a corpse (i.e. the title character, stiffly played by Norman Stuart). "ARNOLD was a horror-comedy," she nods. "I've always enjoyed that hybridized genre of horror-comedy, which is why I loved **THE GRANNY** so much."

Breaching through Stevens' resume, I realize that the actress appeared with Tamara Dobson—a black, 6'2" model turned actress—in no less than three exploitation movies: **A CLEOPATRA JONES** (1973), Dobson faced-off with lesbian drug kingpin Shelley Winters; two years later, Stevens was cast as Dobson's nemesis in the sequel "Tamara is very tall. We fought to the death in **CLEOPATRA AND THE CASINO OF GOLD** where I played the evil Dragon Lady" who was running all of the heroin out of the Golden Triangle. That was a nice role. I got to go to Hong

Kong for a couple of weeks." Stevens and Dobson were reacquainted on the set of 1983's **CHAINED HEAT**, a women-in-prison saga with every B-babe in town (Linda Blair, Edy Williams, Louisa Moritz, Jennifer Ashley) serving time as an inmate. "I was the guard underneath prison warden John Vernon," recounts Stevens. "I got to be the evil, latent lesbian who really loved women but would not touch them." One scene required Sybil Danning to address Stevens' character as "You slimy pig shit." Danning wasn't crazy about that dialogue, prompting Stevens to jump up and down like a kid, volunteering to recite the line. "Let me, I won't say it!" So Stevens was heir to the profanity, which proved so campy that her line ended up in the film's trailer.

One year later, Stevens and Dobson were reunited for a **AMAZONS**, a made-for-TV movie memorable only as a stepping stone for fledgling actress Madeleine Stowe. "I thought at the time, 'What a beautiful woman,'" says Stevens. "Madeleine had this long, beautiful hair and everything about her was so nice. I was the High Priestess of the Amazon, so I didn't get to work all the way through it, but I did have several scenes with her." Unfortunately, the director of the film turned out to be a real dick, who even drove Stowe to tears.

Stella's fella enters the studio and instantly validates her fondness for hybridized hybrids. Musician-composer-music producer Bob Kulick takes a seat while Stevens retires to an adjoining room for the remainder of her make-up ap-

THE HANGOVER (2009): Stevens, as a spiritualist, narrates the title character with another high-profile cast (l-r) Burgess Meredith, Tony Curtis and Ann Blyth.



plication. Thanksgiving of this year will mark the 12th anniversary of Kulick and Stevens' longevity as a loving couple. Naturally, I ask Kulick how they met. "I was recording at the Powers Station in New York," replies Kulick in his outspoken Brooklyn accent. "Richard Baskin, who was directing *ROCK 'N' ROLL HOTEL*, came in with Stella. You see, I was a big fan of hers and I managed to get myself into the conversation. I told her I'd send her some of my music." The film wound-up only "half-made," but Stevens and Kulick started dating within a year. No wonder they're compatible. Kulick proudly recounts that Stevens performed a drum solo in *THE COURTHSHIP OF EDDIE'S FATHER* (1963). This couple really rocks (often to the accompaniment of Kulick's band, Blackthorn). Matter of fact, Kulick did a song—called "Hard Feelings"—that concludes Stevens' latest film, *THE GRANNY*.

Debutting as a director, Stevens wrapped *THE AMERICAN HEROINE* in 1979. The documentary examined the kind of women with whom Stevens bred some familiarity during her lifetime; it wasn't about *Stepford Wives*, nor barefoot, pregnant bimbos, but strong females. Only problem was the title, some unenlightened spectators thought it alluded to drugs.

The remainder of Stevens' acting credits are a gaggle of high-profile B-films like *LAS VEGAS LADY*, *THE MANITOU*, *DOWN THE DRAIN*, *MONSTER IN THE CLOSET* and *THE LONGSHOT*, the latter a "comedy" directed by Paul Bartel, with Mike Nichols serving as executive producer. A couple of movies never saw the light of a film projector, including another hypotenused horror-comedy called *WACKO* (1988), which featured an early appearance by future has-been Andrew Dice Clay. Then there was *THE NUTTY NUT*, a \$12 million screw-



May, 1986: Stevens strikes a pose for *Femine Fatales* feature photographer Steve Falty. "Stella knows how to work the camera. She's in exquisite shape. I went horseback riding with Stella, and she's got more energy than I do—she could probably kick my ass!"

hall comedy that proved Traci Lords (as "Miss Treva") isn't the next Emma Thompson. Stevens recalls that directors were fired, hired, fired. The 1992 disaster was released direct-to-video, earlier this year, as *THE NUTT HOUSE*. But the one credit that catches my eye is 1993's *EYES OF A STRANGER*, which obligated Stevens, Sally Kirkland and Martin Landau to support David Heavener in a David Heavener film

written by David Heavener. So what was is like to work with this quadruple threat? Stevens pauses and struggles for diplomacy: "David was very polite—and directed us very well... I don't know what to say about David except he's doing exactly what he wants to do, and there are a lot of other people in the business who would like to be doing it. He evidently made several films like this."

No stranger to television, Stevens portrayed Lute-

Mae Sanders—the owner of a casino-cum-hordeello and mother of spoiled, illegitimate Constance Weldon Carlyle (Morgan Fairchild)—on NBC's *FLAMINGO ROAD*. Launched in 1981, the prime time soap survived only one season as a result, according to rumor, of right-wing reactionaries insisting on its cancellation. Almost ten years later, Stevens lathered-up daytime TV as Phyllis Blake, mother of *SANTA BARBARA* regular Robin Matt-



Stella Stevens "did the cheesecake stuff." She transmitted the sex kitten stereotype to bubble straight drama, earning twice in THE BALLAD OF CABLE HOGUE.

son. Their bonding kindled a letter campaign, with readers relishing the "Lucy and Ethel" rapport. Between TV stints, Stevens directed her first feature-length movie, *THE RANCH* (1988), she cast her son, Andrew Stevens, in the leading role but deflects charges of nepotism. "Andrew is such a professional actor that I knew I could rely on him," beams Stevens. Her son, a prolific producer/director of "erotic thriller" entertainment who would later hire mom for *THE TERROR WITHIN II*, offered his personal counsel; but Ms. Stevens declared *THE RANCH* as her personal matriarchy. "and nobody was immune to disciplinary tactics should he cross her turf." Andrew and all the other men around me tried to help me direct all the time," deadpans Stevens, "until, finally, I went and got a whip and said, 'There's only one director on the set and it's the one with the whip.'"

It appears that Stevens traded-in the whip for a riding crop, her selected prop for the photo shoot. Her wardrobe ensemble includes a rather risqué allusion to fetishism and fishnet boots. *STAND BACK!* Until now, I've been standing-in (literally on my tip-toes) for Stevens during the preparatory light readings. Stevens, after loading an Aeromath disc into the CD player,

glides in front of the camera and strikes some poses for photographer Steve Palty. But—whoo!—before we get down to business, how about that story about the psychic? Stevens explains the anecdote is related to her most recent role...

Sometimes around 1970, while visiting London, she consulted a spiritualist who read her aura, hands and Tarot cards. "Stella," he said, "the one film you'll be most famous for is the one in which another actress is initially hired, though she'll have to drop out due to illness. You'll replace her and that role will be your greatest triumph." Well, nothing matched that prophecy for the next quarter century—matter of fact, the psychic died during those intervening years while everyone was waiting for something to happen. Then, in 1994, it finally did

"In NUTTY PROFESSOR, Jerry Lewis visualized someone physically perfect on the outside, rotten on the inside. He did not create Buddy Love as a clone of Dean Martin."

happen. Stevens' agent pitched her for *THE GRANNY*, specifically the title role of an 85-year old dowager whom her family loathes. The relatives conspire to bump-off the old geezer and collect her inheritance; but granny makes a comeback, courtesy of a mystical drug she ingested before her untimely demise. It's up to the family's one civil, bawom sibling (Shannon Whirry in an almost fully-clothed performance) to abort the re-erected crone's reign of terror.

"I thought there'd be no way they would hire me for that part," says Stevens. But she was cast in the moody role when the original choice—Shelley Long—developed a case of shingles and required a substitute. "The movie is outrageously gory and funny at the same time," giggles Stevens. "I think people are going to like it in spite of itself. There's a lot of truth in it about the way families hate each other and squabble." Directed by Luca Bercovici (*GHOULIES*, *ROCKY (LA)*), Stevens shines in an over-the-top performance that a less

skilled thespian may have surrendered to as a *MOMMIE DEAREST* mode of camp.

I'd tell you more about Stevens, for starters, there's her mom, a registered nurse who delivered babies in cottonfields... Uncle Hardy, who "rode chain gangs to work on his Parkman Farm"... her current projects, including a cookbook with "Fountain of Youth" recipes, and recent movie assignments (*INVISIBLE WOMAN* and *STARHUNTER*). But let's save these chronicles for next time, OK? Oh yeah, Part II of this bio is right around the corner. Stevens gets involved in projects faster than I can write about 'em. Hell, the bombshell just finished a stint as one of *The Flying Pickets* on a *DAVE'S WORLD* episode (she ran into the dwarf who played *THE MANITOU*, turns out he works on the sitcom's crew!).

Know something? I think Stevens could run for president and win. But that job would be too boring compared to her preferred work. We break during the photo shoot. Stevens is on the phone with an L.A. theatre; seems she's directing a play titled *THESE MEN*, all about two women who can't stop talking about the men in their lives. You know, it's been a trend to replace 30-year-old sex symbols with 20-year-old sex symbols. But no one ever replaced Stella Stevens, because—and this is something that eluded a lot of costing directors—she was never just a sex symbol. She'll be around long after the *RAY-WATCH* babes hit the bricks. □

Taking aim in *STAR HUNTER* (1990), Supported by Roddy McDowall, her *FORBIDDEN ADVENTURE* ARNOLD co-star, Stevens hunts an alien predator.





Top: What do Linda Gray and Sherry Stiles have in common? Both "Satanstoe's" moonlight as writers; in addition to her 1986 comeback, Stiles is composing her autobiography. The health-conscious actress relays the beauty of her frame as a reigning pin-up (below, left); THE POGGON ADVENTURE (c) is saving her knicker roles.



PULP FICTION'S

Did you know that *Fu Manchu's* lascivious daughter made her diabolical father appear as timid as a cocker spaniel? As the author of *Firebrands*, Ron Miller has developed a historic chronicle of pulp fiction heroines, specifically femme fatales—precursors of ALLEN's Ripley—rendered as sci-fi/sword 'n' sorcery icons. Mr. Miller, whose books include *The*

Grand Tour and *Cycles of Fire*, also served as production illustrator on *DUNE* and *TOTAL RECALL*. It's a privilege to welcome him aboard *Femme Fatales*.

In the 1930s and early '50s, the stereotype of the science fiction heroine was—and even still is to a large extent—the professor's daughter who exists for the sole purpose of being put in peril. Most of her dialog was limited to saying "Eek!" How many variations

were there of the typical *Planet Stories* cover, with its swooning, half-naked girl being carried off by a bug-eyed monster, a space-suited hero in hot pursuit?

The stereotype is underserved. There were literally hundreds of heroic femmes whose exploits were depicted in the pulps. Rod Perri MacLaine was a space pirate, and Clarissa MacDougall of E. E. Smith's epic *Lensman* saga, eventually, with the aid of her daughters, saved the entire known universe.

There is also a veritable catalog of superhuman women compiled from the works of Abraham Merritt. Adala the Snake Mother, Nerhala of the lightning, the Fox Woman, and Sherrana, not to mention the surprisingly large numbers of strong female characters written by Edgar Rice Burroughs—Nadara the Cave Girl, La of Opar or Dian the Beautiful, for example.

One of the few characters to best Robert E. Howard's Conan was a woman, Belit, Queen of the Black Coast. And then there's Sax Rohmer's female versions of *Fu Manchu*: Sumuru and Fab Le Sueur; Buck Rogers' Wilma Deering and Violet Ray, the



FEMMES FATALES

Golden Amazon—just to name a very few pre-war and Golden Age heroines.

As I came across more of these superwomen, I worked on painting their images. Before long, the number of my paintings grew to more than fifty, with no end in sight. I read the stories carefully to try to portray the characters as the authors had written them.

The two aspects that I enjoyed most in painting images of the pulp's parade of dynamic heroines, three of which are graced here, were the discovery of wonderful stories and characters that I had been wholly unaware of, and the opportunity to do the paintings of heroines whom I had long admired. From both categories came such splendid characters as Pat Savage, Doc Savage's feisty cousin, described by one of his gang as a "metallic tigress" who carried a single-action six-shooter in her purse that had neither trigger nor sight, but a flaring spur welded to its hammer. Tall, bronze-haired and beautiful, she is an accomplished boxer, fencer and sharpshooter. And Estri, a concubine warrior and queen, heavily put-upon but ultimately the triumphant heroine of a series of novels by Janet Morris.

When I first started showing some of the artwork at SF conventions during slide talks about the book, I was startled at the reaction some of the female fans had to the nudity in some of the paintings. It was not gratuitous; the characters were all depicted in whatever costume—or lack of costume—the authors gave them. And, not one of the women is depicted as anything other than a strong presence—there is not a wimp in the bunch. To me, it seemed that the sexism was being expressed by those women who objected to the nudity—that is, they were saying that simply because the characters were women they should not appear nude or partly nude, regardless of the context. These same protesters did not seem to be bothered by Tarzan and Conan flexing their well-oiled muscles while wearing little more than g-strings, or by Doc Savage's trademark shredded shirt. I would not like to be the one who had to tell Pat Savage to button up her blouse.

—Ron Miller

L: "Two-fisted sapper" Pat Savage, in the Doc's cousin G. Adair, *The Snake Woman* in Abraham Merritt's classic *The Place in the Abyss*, waxes tears of molten gold. R: Estri, "the ultimate (triumphant) heroine," from Janet Morris' series of novels





"I was supposed to be Swedish in *ATTACK OF THE 60 FOOT CENTAUROIDS*, but they took away my accent. Lisa realized same the accent—like 'I'm happy to meet you'—made me sound like a lumber." —LISA

Steamy Starlet Working Mother

EAGER FOR WORK, INGENUES GRIND OUT EXPLOITATION PIX.
A SINGLE MOM TAKES YOU BEHIND-THE-SCENES.

By DAN SCAPPEROTTI

Actresses, sustaining a career in B-films, sometimes have a nasty habit of camouflaging the grit behind a myth of movie stardom. Struggling for what will likely be a vacuous role, they pass a routine "endurance test" per movie—low wages, a daily desk-to-dawn grind, not to mention stereotype if they lapse into an addiction to T&A quickies. But, probed during public appearances, they inflate their salaries and stretch the illusion of glamour tighter than a starlet's micro-bikini. You want the truth? Talk to Evelyn Sealman. She'll relate the story of a working mom's struggle. The truth? Her odds for survival—or steady jobs—are 100:1 in an overwhelmingly competitive business.

Born in the northwestern Ohio town of Fostoria, Sealman rarely ventured outside of that community until she was 21 years old. She gave birth to a daughter at age 16, and it seemed likely Sealman would live the rest of her life and die in Fostoria. But, as an employee of an advertising agency, she was snapped by a local pho-



"I play a rescue gal in *ALIEN ESCAPE*. I'm a victim in the movie, so it was a 3-day job, about 6-8 hours. The producers, Scott and Gail Harris, were very nice."

tographer who submitted the pictures to a Chicago contest. Awarded some major prizes, the shutterbug forwarded the photos to a modeling agency. Bye, bye Fostoria.

Sealman was offered the opportunity to strut down the runway of a modeling show. The assignment's location, New York's Waldorf Astoria Hotel. "I decided I'd go," she grins, "because it was a week in the Big Apple—and I might make it big and famous, because that's what I thought happened. So I went, and I did cold readings and things like that."

Gary Shaffer, a former MGM casting director turned Hollywood agent, saw some potential. He bought Sealman a plane ticket to Hollywood, where the asprant actress shared Shaffer's home with other hopefuls. "Gary started a training program," explains Sealman. "He would take kids from east coast pageants and bring them out here for three months to show them what the life of an actor was really like. You go to classes three times a week, and you go out on auditions, but you live at his house. If it's not what you



"I'd go on doing nudity if I was hired for the testosterone, David Moore-type roles."

thought it was cracked up to be, then you have the option to go home after three months. Naturally, I met a guy and fell in love and all that, so I wanted to stay."

Waiting tables, Saalman earned a comfortable living and was soon joined by her daughter, Schaffer, serving as Saalman's agent, landed her a plum role in *BLONDE HEAVEN*, an erotic thriller produced by Full Moon's 'boutique subsidiary. "They had picked another girl, but she turned it down. So I got it," recalls Saalman. "Dave DeCoteau directed, but under another name [Ellen Cohen]. I had never been on a set before, I didn't even know what a mark was. They'd say, 'Okay, Raelyn,

step on your mark.' During that first day, I had to ask, 'What's a mark?' But I did it. I found it was easy to remember all my lines. They also needed a Southern accent, and I do accents very well."

"There was a lot of pressure on me, because I had to be in every scene. It was about a ten day shoot and the director didn't talk to me for about six days! Then he sat down with me and said he was very happy with my work. He thought I was going to work a lot. That's all he said to me during the whole movie."

Supported by Michelle Bauer, Julie Strain and Monique Parent—the B-Cinema's most frequently

RAELYN SAALMAN

"I read a 'comedy' script that made me cry for 3 days. It was humiliating! Within the first 3-8 pages, the woman they wanted me to play was going down on girls, going down on guys..."

employed bombshells—Saalman made her film debut as Angie Somers, a virgin-like lass from Peace Tree, Oklahoma. Upon her arrival in Hollywood, Angie applies for employment at a combination escort service/modeling agency called *Blonde Heaven*; of course, she doesn't realize the establishment is operated by a tribe of vampires. "The whole idea is that you have to be bitten twice to become a vampire," says Saalman. "They also can be out in the daylight because of 'Sun Block 10,000.' Anyway, Julie Strain, as Lilyana, manages the girls. It turns out that Angie is an identical twin of Lilyana's dead lover; the twist, of course, is that Angie is a female but Lilyana's deceased lover was male. Nevertheless, Lilyana falls in love with Angie and hopes to convert her to vampirism. Angie's boyfriend tries to rescue her, but he's killed and Angie allows Lilyana to bite her for a second time. Sounded to me like a sequel may have been in the works, and I thought it would be so funny to encounter a vampire with a

Southern accent."

But a Part II installment seems unlikely. Though Saalman leaped the movie, and art was shot for the video carton, the release of *BLONDE HEAVEN* has been indefinitely postponed as a result of Full Moon's financial straits.

A feminist strain rippled through another low-budget fantasy, *REVENGE OF THE CALENDAR GIRLS* (FF 3-1), though one suspects the message was subliminally delivered in the show of skin. "It's a fantasy about sexy calendar pin-ups that come to life," grins Saalman, who played only a minor role. "The girls, turned into flesh and blood sexpots, succumb to these greasy garage workers who ego their calendar pictures. But each of the men eventually disappears. At the end of the movie, the calendar girls, who are now running the garage, rip open a new calendar; it turns out the pin-ups are pictures of the grease monkeys who mysteriously disappeared."

"I played Daisy, the quirky little assistant of the queen who rules over the

J.J. North, Saalman and Tommy Fox on the 40 FOOT CENTERFOLD set. "I was kind of the third wheel of the trio, a B-list in a magazine context."



Calendar Girls. I wore glasses and just followed behind her. I'm always bumping into her and pushing up my glasses. At the end of the movie, I turn into a vixen and let my hair down."

Saalman celebrated her first year in Tinseltown with a role in **PLAYBOY GOES WEST**, a series of vignettes shot for the Playboy Channel. The Soldado Canyon setting should have looked familiar to the actress; the same location was utilized for **CALENDAR GIRLS**. "Once again, my Southern accent came in handy," laughs Saalman. "I played the part of a gunslinging cowgirl. All the Western stereotypes—the prim n' proper girl, the madam—are suited for a card game. Suddenly, a man from St. Louis bursts into the saloon and claims he's going to teach us a new card game; it turns out to be strip poker. By the time he gets us down to our gunbelts, we realize that he's been cheating. We pull our guns on him, tie him to a horse and fire our weapons. The horse takes off and drags him through the town. Of course, we're all standing there in the buff...except for our gunbelts."

According to Saalman, the rigors of nude scenes are abated by the cast and crew's chivalrous demeanor. "They're all very professional," she notes, "and there's always someone there with a robe. There's nobody gawking or anything like that. Everyone knows what is going to happen that day. For instance, on **BLONDE HEAVEN**, I was so up for it! This was legal cheating, and I'm getting paid for it, too! The guy that I worked with, Alton Butler, was real uncomfortable with it even though he makes his living stripping. I kept wondering, 'What's up with you?' When we were filming, we just pretended that we liked it. You know what I mean?"

"You just try to keep your distance. You look like you're kissing a lot, and things like that, but you



"I will no longer work in the sex-acton industry I was recently cast in the HBO series, **EROTIC CONFESSIONS**."

barely do it. It's just a lot of motion. I've seen things happen on sets where people don't get along; they just dread every moment of it—but me?—I try to have fun with love scenes. I may ask for some music, or maybe ask what the other actor feels comfortable with. It works out."

Cost opposite J.J. North

and Tammy Parks in **ATTACK OF THE 60 FOOT CENTERFOLD**, Saalman portrayed Swedish model Inga Torsen. "I was kind of a third wheel," she admits. "It wasn't a big part. Three girls were there just to be finalists in a magazine contest, and my character was there just so there would be more competition. J.J.

drinks the serum, becomes 60 feet tall, and I try to help her, but Tammy, who's out for revenge, drinks the serum to compete with her."

Her next assignment, originally produced as **RAW FOOTAGE**, surfaced on the Playboy Channel as **KILLING FOR LOVE**. The premise: a cutthroat stalks a movie set to bump off the

cast and crew. Once again, Saalman was stuck with a decorative role. But when you're struggling in the B-business, a job's a job. "I played Amber Knight, a make-up artist," recalls Saalman. "I hardly had any lines. I was around to be supportive of my on-screen boyfriend."

"Right after making love in a bathtub, I got murdered. Someone throws a radio in the water. They put purple dye on our tongues and I kept my eyes completely bugged out. We were in the bathtub for twelve hours. They kept adding warm water and we had big terry cloth robes."

The limitations of the role notwithstanding, Saalman insists she "learned a lot more from that film. The director of photography, Howard Wexler, was also the DP on 60 FOOT CENTERFOLD. When he worked with me on KILLING FOR LOVE, I started learning camera angles and whatever made me look better. And the director let me look at raw footage of my performance. Now, when I go to an audition, I try to dress like the character... I pick up bits and pieces and act like the character."

Promoted to a supporting role in Tribeca's FRIEND OF THE FAMILY, Saalman shared screen time with two other ingenues, Shauna O'Brien (MALIBU BIKINI WEEKEND) and Lisa Boyle (MIDNIGHT TEASE). The erotic fantasy involves "love and redemption," accommodated by an angelic variant named Elke (played by Penthouse model O'Brien). "I'm Lisa's best, little friend," says Saalman. "I'm always at her house and I like her brother, played by Will Potter, though he's real shy and I'm always bothering him. Elke brings him out of his shell and he finally comes on to me. I do a video montage for his class, then we have a big, steamy love scene."

Exempting its gender-bender twist, LETTING GO—Saalman's subsequent

RAE LYN SAALMAN

"Some actors just dread every moment of it, but I try to have fun with love scenes. I may ask for some music, or maybe ask what the other actor feels comfortable with. It works out."



"I recently quit my waitressing job at Fred Lehner and lived on acting cash."

assignment—would appear to have been influenced by INDECENT PROPOSAL. "I play Jennifer Phelan, who's in love with her boyfriend even though their repair business don't make much money."

"One job lands Jennifer in the home of a mysterious woman, who asks some really strange questions. Jen-

nifer reveals that she and her boyfriend can't get married because they're in debt. The woman offers her \$100,000 to sleep with her husband, and Jennifer bolts out of there. But, when she gets home, the car is being repossessed and the bank is threatening to foreclose the mortgage on the house. Jennifer, who has never been

with a man except her boyfriend, reconsiders the mystery lady's offer. But it turns out that woman is actually the jilted ex-girlfriend of Jennifer's boyfriend. Seems she was out for revenge."

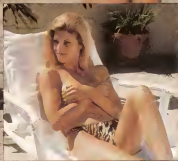
As a result of personal experience, Saalman has acclimated herself to stress situations inherent in the auditioning process. "When I was 18," she recalls, "I sold cars and when I was 19, I was a retail manager. By the time I turned 20 or 21, I sold advertising for a radio station. That's where I learned cold reading, because I wrote the copy for the commercials. Acting is a lot like being a salesperson. It's showmanship and a positive attitude. Not unlike a salesperson, an actress always has to look her best. It's just a change of products. I'm selling myself. So you have to stay in shape, sharpen your skills. I used to have to attend sales seminars, and now I have to go to acting class."

"I take Tai Kwon Do and it's great because it's about self control. It's good mental exercise, too, because you get frustrated as an actor. You can kick the crap out of a bag instead of screaming at someone out your car window."

While waiting for her breakthrough role, Saalman is occupied with a more practical, off-screen role, as a single mother, she must supplement her income to support a seven-year-old daughter. "I work at Red Lobster," explains Saalman. "So in addition to being an actress and a mom, I also wait tables." Sometimes, both professions tumble on a collision course. Saalman recalls one recent evening when her manager called, he enlightened her to a small "bartender" role was up for grabs on THE WATCHER television series. One catch: she'd have to audition early in the morning. In Las Vegas.

"I had to have somebody

continued on page 40



"Me from 60 FOOT
CENTERFOLD, again
(left). My co-star,
Tammy Faye (above),
isn't bothered by the
nudity. She says, 'I
really don't care about
the Oscar—I just want
to go to the party after
the ceremony.'"



SKIN SHOW AT THE BIKINI BAR

**DAYTIME'S
FEMMES FATALES
SIZZLE IN SOAP.**

BY TINA DESIREE BERG

It goes something like this: I received a call from **THE BOLD AND THE BEAUTIFUL** casting director, who was frantically searching for enough swimsuit scenery to stretch through two episodes. I approved the assignment, but not before pitching a behind-the-scenes chronicle to the *Femme Fatale* editor. Never mind that

Right: Yours truly, Tina, (winking non-alcoholic beer) (below: *B&B* regulars Dylan McDermott (who stole her hat from *Mad Cow*) and Marland Wood

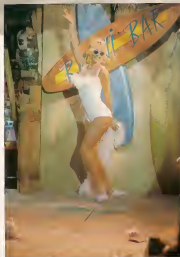




This is Kristin Allen. Kristin's a real babe. Great personality, too. She was seen on *Shelly*, girlfriend of Blind Bar owner, My (Great Jeopardy). Male fans will be devastated to learn that Kristin is no longer associated with THE GOLD & THE BEAUTIFUL.



Off-camera, Schae Harrison was hardly—pretty much a match for ‘Doris,’ her extroverted soap character. She persuaded the *Widal Bar* gang to strip down to their swimwear and put on a show—of course, Schae’s the first to strut down the catwalk. (L2)



Below: Me and the *Wid* repertory. (L-r) Brent Jenner (Ry), Scott Thompson (Baker) (Canna), Dylan Hall (Dylan), Krista Allen (Shelly), Schae Harrison (Doris) and Mollard Ward (Annie). No, I’m somewhere behind Baker.



BOLD is the most popular series on the globe, viewed daily by 200 million people in 79 countries; he was still initially reluctant to talk about an article, at least until I described my gig's setting as "the world famous Bikini Bar." *Green light.*

Upon my arrival at the studio, I was greeted by the typical "hurry up and wait" situation—check-in and instantly change into wardrobe, even though there's plenty of leftover time to read the combined works of Stephen King, Jackie Collins and the late Robert Bloch. Anyway, I took this opportunity to get acquainted with several of the actors and crew members who educated me on everything from politics to winning Vegas blackjack to making Taco Bell waiters feel humiliated and suicidal.

Sitting fast on the set, I exchanged pleasantries with my friend, celebrity photographer Kathy Hutchins, and vivacious Eddie Garcia who was writing an article for *Soap Opera Digest*. The premise for the day's shoot, which melded teeny-weeny bikini and the Malibu beach scene, was amusingly campy. Matter of fact, the only thing really stale about this episode was the set, hot lights turned the real foliage into a smog. The resultant aroma, wafting through the studio, was not unlike Swamp Thing wearing a cheap aftershave lotion.

Our first scene was introduced with a union between

Michael Butler, a regular Bikini Bar patron, and former Playboy Playmate Petra Kerkink. As the cast laughed and dined, the twists and turns of the script unfolded. Succinctly, the plot reminded me of an Andy Hardy movie tailored for the USA network. It seems Sly (Brent Janssen), owner of the Bikini Bar, is floundering, since his models haven't showed up for work, the pub is in a pickle. A shut-down appears imminent. The adorable hunk desperately tries to persuade everyone—including curvy waitress Shelly (Krista Allen), beautiful pal Jessica (Maitland Ward) and Jessica's boss Dylan (Dylan Neal)—to slip into swim suits. Probably taking a tip from Darla (Schae Harrison), who grasps at the

"Krista Allen—clad in an abbreviated, gingham two-piece swimsuit—prompted so many flash bulbs to pop that the studio resembled a plutonium test."



Soaps are breeding grounds for prospective *Business Week* (Kathleen Turner, Barbara Crampton, etc.). I think co-iff player Krista Allen is a sure bet!

opportunity to ventilate her trim physique, the gang finally shows enough skin to raise more than the ratings.

A few takes later, a real-life soap was embodied by Debbie Dunning, better known as "The Toilettime Girl" on ABC's HOME IMPROVEMENT, she appeared to be moonlighting on the soap. Strutting across the set, Dunning promptly donned a wig and a bad attitude. Conversing between lighting alterations, she managed to verbally insult most of the cast and crew, including yours truly. Sample: when I was complimented on my resemblance to Jerry Hall, the Toilettime Girl felt it necessary to interject, "Oh, but Jerry Hall is beautiful." My shocked admirer

shot back with, "Well, so is Tina." Thank you.

As the day progressed, the on-screen story turned campier than an Al Adamson movie; though the joint is swarming with bikini, Sly continues to fret over the outcome of his tavern. The surprise twist: respected attorney Conner (Scott Thompson Baker) sheds his business attire and rigid demeanor, surfacing in a wet-suit and carrying a surfboard. Between the party atmosphere and tropical drinks, one couldn't help but plunge into the revelry. The sweet-spoken, curvy Kerkink wore a scene-stealing itty-bitty number that aptly matched the title of the show.

Breaking for lunch, I joined Butler, Garcia and show publicist Jonathan Zaleski in the commissary. While standing in line, I heard temperamental grumblings, from a now familiar voice, coming directly behind us. Dunning resented the Spartan inconveniences of the soap—like the diplomacy of waiting one's turn to be served. And she wanted everyone to know it. Flopping down her tray, Dunning loudly proclaimed, "I'm not used to this, I'm used to being the center of attention!" Hmmm, would you like some cheese with that urine?

By the time we munched our edibles and pounded down some java, it was time to get back to work.

Butler and I settled down for a rip-roaring fashion show, replete with plastic

sandbucket and shovel props. We screamed, we hollered, we whooped our guts out. Swimsuits strutted down the runway, and Krista Allen—clad in an abbreviated red gingham two-piece—prompted so many flashbulbs to pop that the studio interior resembled a plutonium test. Schae Harrison was a close second in her retro pink-feathered number and matching boa, while Maitland Ward's calm demeanor was complemented by her black one-piece tank suit. The actors proved to be viable escorts and trim, muscular models in their trunks and wetwets. A couple of takes and camera angles later, my day-in-the-life-of-a-soap opera had come to a close. Yeah, guys...all this and a paycheck, too. □

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SHAUNA O'BRIEN

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"By that point in the movie, I think I was having my period and I was PMing like crazy. I was very much stressed out, and just didn't want to learn a whole bunch of Tai Chi moves, and the girl who was trying to teach me was the friggin' driver for the car pool van who just happened to know Tai Chi. She started yelling at me and saying, 'I have a problem with people who say they can't. I said, 'I have a problem with people who fucking drive a van for a living and try to tell me what to do!' I said, 'Kiss my ass, I'm not doing this.' I went to the director and told him I could give him

something much sexier, with me dancing around, rather than doing some stupid Tai Chi thing and he said, 'Fine, just do your dance thing.' He was great and—" Her phone rings, and O'Brien starts to chat with execs from TriStar Entertainment, the company that's releasing **FRIEND OF THE FAMILY**; they want to talk about more movies.

So, what'd I tell you? She's direct... in your face... to h.a. A survivor. Taught me a lesson: don't swallow what you hear on television. I mean, Charlie Sheen "tamed down" Shauna O'Brien?" Yeah, right... and I believe Jean-Claude Van Damme dances with superhum faeries. □

RAEYLN SAALMAN

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come here to take me to the airport and stay with my daughter. I booked a flight for 4 AM and arrived in Vegas about 6 AM. They didn't audition me until 8:30 AM, and I was a nervous wreck. I had four pages of dialogue, but I got the part but then had to wait until 5 o'clock in the evening to film it.

"I had to work a shift at Red Lobster, the same day, at 4 PM. So I had to call my boss, and tell him that I couldn't come to work because I was going to be on television. He didn't think that was too cool. He pretty much fired me over the phone. On the set, I was

given a lot of dialogue. I was nervous. I mean, they really need you and they don't give you much direction. We just ran the lines. I was pretty much just behind the bar.

"I had to fly home, pick up my daughter and put her to bed. I didn't sleep at all because I was worried about Red Lobster. Next day, I went there and my boss admitted he had been nasty and said, 'You're a good employee, you've worked a long time here, and he gave me my job back.'

Her stint on **THE WATCHER** also qualified Saalman as S.A.G. eligible. But, this afternoon, she appears more driven by a domestic appointment than her quest for an A-film role. "I'm on the site committee at my daughter's school. It decides where the money is spent. I'm also on the Leadership Council for special projects and fundraisers, and Mother Helper which discusses needs the kids have."

Postscript: Saalman's post-interview projects include a role in singer Shania's CD-Plus video, **HOLDING ON**. "You can put it on your CD player," she grins, "but when you put it in your computer, it's like MTV without the commercials." Then there was **ALIEN ESCAPE**, with Saalman cost opposite the film's co-producer, Gail Harris (see page 5). Another recent assignment is the made-for-cable **BABEWATCH**. Directed by Kirk Sloane, whose **VICE ACADEMY** movies personally escape on the USA network, the 7-day production dispatches Saalman on rescue missions—

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You can read all about the movie and Michelle Bauer in

FF Vol 4 No 3, but don't take our word for it, rent a copy at your local video store before you decide to add it to your collection! Free stuff courtesy of the producers, these shoe folks at Schanachie Entertainment, and film director Ted Bohan. Order now, while supplies last!





FF centerfold Donna Spangler, cast as one of Devil Girl's DINOSAUR VALLEY G.F.s, presented the film at Cannes—and showed more than her colleagues

FATALE ATTRACTIONS

continued from page 8

movies, there's no nudity for me in this one... though my character has lots of boyfriends."

• Reporting from the 1995 Cannes Film Festival, one writer noted, "Topless starlets still covet on the beach and cinema legends climb red carpeted steps to the evening screenings. When in doubt, sex sells. Pamela Anderson peddled her film *BARE* WIRE with a news conference where paparazzi climbed all over each other to get the right angle." Playboy model Donna Spangler, who introduced our *Femme Fever*—Album II! pictorial (21) as the centerfold, was equally conspicuous. "On the beach," continued the writer, "Ms. Spangler doffed her top to the delight of a huge crowd as cameras clicked and whirled." Spangler, in fact, was generating a Cannes heat wave to promote *DINOSAUR VALLEY GIRLS*. The remainder of the film's cast includes Griffin Drew (*DINOSAUR ISLAND, FRIEND OF THE FAMILY*), William Marshall and Karen Black. Pacific author

Donald F. Glut, whose reference books *The Frankenstein Catalog*, *The Dracula Book* have been indispensable to the *FF* library, wrote and directed the sexy spot.

• *Baltimore*, *FF*'s hometown, is the site of Scopic Pottery's *GAME OF PLEASURE*. Dale E. Frientz, the film's director, abridges the premise to "BASIC INSTINCT meets *BRANSCAN*. It explores the boundaries of reality and unreality in a computer-generated environment." In a "life imitates art" situation, as a Blazy Berkeley, the leading lady was injured in an auto accident; the filmmakers called our office for advice regarding a substitute actress who could tackle the film's most plum role. *FF* staffer Gary Miller, moonlighting as the film's unit photographer, conferred with producer Kevin Summerfield on the set. "No doubt about it," related Miller via a phone call on location, "—this movie is red hot, steamy, sexy, and I mean that literally. I shot some shower scenes with one of the supporting actresses and—what with the hot lights and fog machine going full blast—

the temperature must have soared to 110 degrees." The filmmakers are alternately intensifying and softening certain scenes for unrated/V-rated versions. "Makeup technicians were called in for some gruesome scenes," continues Miller. "See, a computer virus manifests itself as a gorgeous woman who physically mutates into this demonic—(gasp)—They're calling me in for another shoot. This time, I'll apply a sun screen—which is a lot more than the actress in the scene is wearing. Gotta go—bye!" Glut.

• Elizabeth Sandifer (*INDECENT BEHAVIOR, ANIMAL INSTINCTS*), profiled in *FF* 4:1, found another role to further detach herself from the erotic thriller stereotype: "Yeah, I just finished *THE LONG GAME*, a coming-of-age comedy... even though the 'age,' in this picture, is somewhere in the late twentysomething bracket. I play a sort of wild girl who persuades a yuppie to 'do what you really want to do,' which he does and, in the process, breaks up with his girlfriend. Michael Kelly shot the film for a PG rating and, from the point of view of what I want to accomplish professionally, the role was my most satisfying to date."

• She has already been acclaimed as "the Bo Derek of the 90s." Formerly the lead singer for an MCA Records group, 24-year-old Claudia Kalem wrote "One Desire," a song walled during a very sexy lesbian seduction scene, between *Amore Milano* and Cherlone Lewis, in *EMERSON OF THE WAMPYRE* (*FF* 3:4); the song plays the length of the scene, six minutes, and will be available on the film's soundtrack. Kalem is currently starring in Live Entertainment's *PHAT BEACH*, the first black beach movie in history. "Move over, Freddie and Annette," cautioned one reporter. The supporting cast includes Jermaine Hopkins (*LEAN ON ME, JUICE*), rap star Coolio and models from the *Darker Image* '95 Swimsuit Calendar. Similar to Derek's role in 10, Kalem embodies the myth of the fantasy woman. Along with recording arena VNY and Paperboy, Kalem scored some of the hip hop tunes that will surface on the soundtrack.

• *TO DIE FOR*, the spicy black comedy introduced in *FF* 3:3, garnered rave reviews at the Cannes Film Festival. Columbia Pictures has sagely bumped the Nicole Kidman stunner from its summer release and rescheduled it for a September premiere; consider the move as a marketing tactic to milk more press while circumventing the blockbuster competition.

F-E MAIL

continued from page 8

deressing the player with your mission. After this brief round of Harold Pinter theatre, the game turns into one of this year's best role-playing adventures. You have the option to have female mercenaries, including Cynthia "The Fox" Guzman and Megan "Spely" Reedburn.

Role model?

Horizon Productions is offering the summer collection of *SPICES* figurines. Still, the firm's mutant breeder played by gorgeous Natasha Henstridge, has been replicated as a sold model kit, yeh, she's sculpted as a "huge naked woman" but still is no cornball! Uh-uh, she's in full Giger glory, partially transformed into her hideous alter ego "Scary but erotic," noted one company spokesperson. Horizon is also debuting mini-pewter figures of the film's decidedly non-human characters. For further info, write Horizon at 912 East 3rd Street, Suite 101, Los Angeles, CA 90043.

FEMFORCE—the movie?

The August/September issue of *Femforce* #67 will celebrate the team's tenth anniversary on newsstands. It'll also launch "Countdown to 100," only 13 issues until the all-female superhero comic talks its triple number. Producer Mike Frankovich, Jr. is speculating on a tentative cast for his *FEMFORCE* film. Sharon Blak as Syn, actress/singer Doni Lan as She-Cat and Julie Michaels (*FF* 2:3) as Rayda. Other likely candidates include Rochelle Swanson (*SORCERESS, HARD BOUNTY*) as Nightveil, fitness maven Nancy Georges as Tere and actress/writer Cynthia Herrison as alien beauty Stardust. And who will make the grids as Dawn Hunter? Lois Hamilton, that's who. Didn't you read *FF* 3:3? □

Sharon Blak, likely to be cast as Syn in the *FEMFORCE* movie, celebrates the comic's 100th issue



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